

Note

These four chapters from the manuscript of Sandew Hira titled *Decolonizing The Mind* are not for distribution. The book should be published at the end of this year.

It explains a theoretical framework of DTM. In my lecture in Barcelona I will go into the application of DTM to decolonial analysis.

1. Three narratives of liberation

1.1 A DTM concept of colonialism

"Decolonizing knowledge and power", "Decolonizing the universities", "Decolonizing international relations", "Decolonizing the diet", "Decolonizing God", "Decolonizing mathematics", "Decolonizing The Mind (DTM)". The internet is full with references to decolonizing something, yet many of these concepts seem to be unrelated to a more common notion of decolonization: the political independence of European colonies. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines this common notion of decolonization as *"the process of making a colony or a group of colonies independent."*¹

The *Routledge Companion to Decolonization* locates the period of decolonization to two decades and two continents: *"The decolonization of the European colonies in Africa and Asia was perhaps the most important historical process of the twentieth century. Within less than two decades, from 1947 to the mid-1960s, several colonial empires disappeared and scores of new nations became independent. Altogether it had taken more than three centuries to expand and consolidate these empires. Compared to this long span of time, the short period of decolonization appears to be only a fleeting moment in the course of history, and yet it is of utmost significance."*²

The independence struggle of the white European enslavers of the thirteen British colonies in America or the struggle of Bolivarian movements in Latin America against Spain are not seen as part of decolonization in the common narrative.

The current concept of decolonizing the world is in contrast to the old concept of decolonization as a political process of independence of former colonies. This book deals with this new concept. It tries to provide a coherent theoretical framework, which I call Decolonizing The Mind (DTM), to undertake decolonial analysis.

Let me start by explaining a DTM concept of colonialism. I define colonialism as a global system of economic, social, political and cultural institutions that organize the world into two main parts: the colonized part that is exploited and oppressed in order to serve the economic, social, political and cultural interests of the other part, the colonizer. The state is such an institution, but colonization was not only a matter of states. The British East India Company was a private company that ruled India economically, militarily and politically from their offices between 1757 and 1858. They had a private army twice the size of the British army. The British colonization of India was initially a matter of an enterprise, which is a private institution, not a state.

There are five interrelated dimensions to colonialism:

1. Economic dimension. The economic dimension is about the process of production, distribution and financing of goods and services in such a way that wealth that is produced in the colonized world is transferred to the colonizers world. The economic dimension has gone through different phases, from an initial phase where blatant robbery, enslavement and forced labour were the norm to the current stage where other mechanisms are used in the transfer of wealth.
2. Social dimension. The social dimension is about the process of the organization of social relations of human beings and between humans and their natural environment. The principles that were used to organize social relations until the rise of colonialism were determined by the social division of labour, gender, religion, natural environment and technology. Colonialism introduced three new principles in organizing social relations:
 - The concept of race and ethnicity linked to the concept of superiority and inferiority of human beings.

- The concept of the principle of the individual versus society as a way to organize social relations.
 - The organization of mass migration based on the needs of the rising world colonial order.
3. Political dimension. The political dimension is about the process of the formation, institutionalization, perpetuation and challenging of power in a society. Power is expressed in control and administration of states and communities on the one hand and the struggle against that control and administration on the other. In the course of its history colonialism has introduced a variety of mechanisms of control and administration in different parts of the world. The direct control whereby administrators of the colonizer were living in the colony and running the day-to-day business has nowadays been replaced by a more complex and diffused system of indirect control. The challenge of political power by social movements is part of this dimension.
 4. Cultural dimension. The cultural dimension is about the process of production and dissemination of knowledge about nature and society and the material and immaterial expression of this knowledge. Culture is institutionalized in educational institutions that produce knowledge and institutions for the dissemination of knowledge. Culture is also institutionalised in material culture (clothing, food, housing, architecture etc) and immaterial culture (language, art, customs, rituals etc). Colonialism introduced two elements in culture:
 1. The introduction of the principle of superiority and inferiority in knowledge production with the claim that Western knowledge production is superior to non-Western knowledge.
 2. The introduction of the principle of superiority and inferiority in culture along the lines of race and ethnicity.
 5. Geographic dimension. The geographic dimension is about the process of the rise of a global society where interaction in the other four dimensions is expressed in the interaction between regions on a world scale. So this dimension does not stand on its own but has a specific importance in understanding the geographical component of the other dimensions. The economic system evolved from a loose collection of regional economic centres into a global system of interdependent economic institutions and economic processes. Political control and administration extended from the rise of nation-states to the growth of an international political system of control and administration. Globalization led to the destruction of societies through genocides in the Americas and mass enslavement and forced migration of millions of people from Africa and Asia to the Americas where new societies came into existence based on oppression and exploitation. A diverse system of cultures from civilizations and traditions around the world were forced into a "universal" system of scientific knowledge production and related cultural institutions. Since the second half of the twentieth century new forms of migration brought the colonized people in the hearth of the metropolis of the colonizer.

The five dimensions are interrelated. The economic exploitation is organized along social lines, maintained by political mechanisms that suppresses dissent and justified by cultural institutions on a global scale.

This DTM concept of colonialism enables us to understand the nature of colonialism and its historical development. The old concept of colonialism referred to just one dimension of colonialism: the political dimension, and more specifically the direct administrative control of the colony. Political independence is the transfer of direct administrative control by representatives of the colonizer to representatives of the colonized. It is possible that nothing else changed and political control by the colonizer was exercised in other ways. Frantz Fanon mentions the case of the independence of Gabon in 1960 with Gabriel Léon M'ba becoming the first president. According to Fanon M'ba stated "*in all*

seriousness on his arrival in Paris for an official visit: 'Gabon is independent, but between Gabon and France nothing has changed; everything goes on as before.' In fact, the only change is that Monsieur M'ba is president of the Gabonese Republic and that he is received by the president of the French Republic."³

The anti-colonialist movement includes people like M'ba who focus on the transfer of direct administrative control. But it also consists of people like Kwame Nkruma of Ghana who acknowledge the economic dimension and uses the term "neo-colonialism" that points to the limitations of political independence: *"The essence of neocolonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent, and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from the outside."*⁴

Both "anti-colonialism" and "neo-colonialism" don't address the other dimensions of colonialism: social, cultural and geographical.

Another term that is popular, especially among Marxists, is "imperialism" and is related to the development of capitalism. *"Marxist theories of the development of capitalism on a world scale,"* explains A. Brewer, *"fall into two groups: those that concentrate on the progressive role of capitalism in developing the forces of production, and those that present capitalism as a system of exploitation of one area by another, so development in a few places is at the expense of the 'development of underdevelopment' in most of the world."*⁵ Imperialism is either seen as a higher stage of the development of capitalism or as a system that has developed from the start as a world system. But in both theories the focus is on the economic dimension of capitalism in the world system, especially the mechanisms of economic exploitation. Imperialism is mainly regarded as an economic and political system.

With the rise of the decolonial movement there is a shift of focus to the social and cultural dimensions of colonialism. An annual Summer School organized by University of California Berkeley professor Ramon Grosfoguel in Barcelona, Spain, typically is named "Decolonizing Knowledge and Power". Colonization is not only an economic and political system, but also a social and cultural system. Grosfoguel builds on a concept introduced by Frantz Fanon on the zone of being and non-being. *"There is a zone of nonbeing, an extraordinarily sterile and arid region, an utterly naked declivity where an authentic upheaval can be born,"* writes Fanon.⁶ Grosfoguel elaborates: *"In an imperial/capitalist/colonial world-system, race constitutes the transversal dividing line that cuts across multiple power relations such as class, sexual and gender at a global scale."*⁷ The world is divided in a zone of being where humans are treated as human beings and a zone of non-being where humans are treated as non-humans or inferior humans. Grosfoguel: *"The conflicts in the zone of being are administered through perpetual peace with exceptional moments of war; in the zone of non-being we have perpetual war with exceptional moments of peace. The class, gender and sexual oppression lived within the zone of being and within the zone of non-being are not the same. Since conflicts with the dominant elites and ruling classes within the zone of being are non-racial, we have it that in the conflicts of class, gender and sexuality the 'Other Being' shares in the privileges of the imperial codes of law and rights, the emancipation discourses of the Enlightenment and their peaceful processes of negotiation and resolution of conflicts. In contrast, since in the zone of non-being conflicts of class, gender, and sexuality are at the same time articulated with racial oppression, the conflicts are managed and administered with violent methods and constant appropriation/dispossession. Class, gender and sexual oppression as lived by the 'Non-Being Other' are aggravated due to the joint articulation of such oppressions with racial oppression."*⁸

Colonialism has introduced zones of being and non-being that cut across geographical, economic, cultural, social and political lines. These zones exist in the world on a global scale and divides the world in a global North and a global South. They also exist in the global North where race and ethnicity as organizing principles in urban areas and segregated communities in the metropolis of the West.

Similar notions of colonialism have been developed across the world in Asia, Africa, Latin-America, Europe and North America. Since 2002 the Multiversity Network in Malaysia organizes conferences to decolonize the universities. In Africa students mobilized to bring down the statue of Cecil Rhodes under the banner of decolonizing knowledge. In Latin America countries like Bolivia and Peru are setting up indigenous universities, called Aymara universities named after the Aymara people, that take into account in their curriculum the knowledge that has been produced by the indigenous civilizations of the Americas. This is a totally different view of colonialism compared to the old notion of colonialism of the subjugation of colonized nations by colonizer nations.

More and more “decolonization” is seen as a new narrative of liberation that is vested in an alternative production of knowledge. But what is it an alternative of?

Basically it is an alternative for two other narratives of liberation that has dominated knowledge production for almost two centuries: Liberalism and Marxism.

1.2 Liberalism as a theory of liberation

“Liberalism as an intellectual movement of ideas has been a pre-eminent force in the history of political thought, establishing itself since its conception in the early nineteenth century as ‘the outstanding doctrine of Western civilization’,” writes R. Turner.⁹

Liberalism came about in the age of the European White Enlightenment as a collection of theories that looks at the liberation of human being from religious and social controls.

The economic theory of Liberalism is based on the work of classical economists like Adam Smith (1723-1790). His central thesis is that an economic system based on private property and free markets produces the best result for economic development and welfare. The law of supply and demands ensures an efficient and optimal flow of production, distribution and financing of goods and services. Adam Smith explains the reason behind this law. An individual *“neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it... He is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. Nor is it always the worse for the society that it was no part of it. By pursuing his own interest, he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it.”*¹⁰

So, if everyone pursues his own selfish interest (which is profit maximization on the long run) the law of supply and demand ensures an outcome that is accepted as satisfactory by everyone. There is no ethics involved. This is an objective social law.

“The program of liberalism ... if condensed into a single word, would have to read: property, that is, private ownership of the means of production... All the other demands of liberalism result from this fundamental demand,” says Austrian liberal economist Ludwig von Mises.¹¹ Private property is the corner stone of liberal economics, of capitalism.

With private property and the free market comes a specific role of the state. Von Mises: *“As the liberal sees it, the task of the state consists solely and exclusively in guaranteeing the protection of life, health, liberty, and private property against violent attacks. Everything that goes beyond this is an evil.”*¹²

There have been variations in the economic theory of liberalism, but the basic tenets are unchanged: free markets, private property and the state as an institution to protect them.

British economist John Maynard Keynes developed a theory of how the state should intervene in the markets during economic crises with fiscal and monetary policies to ensure the survival of capitalism.¹³ Markets need not to be completely free. The state can intervene and regulate the market and thus the economy to guarantee its future functioning.

The social theory of Liberalism revolves around the relationship between the individual and society. The individual is the focus of their analysis. Individuals are the basis of society. Society puts limitations on the development of the talents and capabilities of the individual. English philosopher, John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) puts the basic questions on this regard: *"What ... is the rightful limit to the sovereignty of the individual over himself? Where does the authority of society begin? How much of human life should be assigned to individuality, and how much to society?"*¹⁴ He provides the answer: *"The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others."*¹⁵

Outside of this limitation the individual should be free to do whatever he (invariably he talks about males) wants to do. The relationship between an individual and society is regulated through a social contract. By this contract the individual gives up some of his freedom to the state (the authority of the ruler) in exchange for protection of other rights. French philosopher of the Enlightenment, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) articulates the essence of the social contract as follows: *"What man loses by the social contract is his natural liberty and an unrestricted right to anything he wants and can get. What he gains [is] civil liberty and the ownership of everything he possesses."*¹⁶

Individual freedom is the freedom to set up a business. There can be moral, cultural, political, judicial and other rules that set limitations for the development of his business. Individual freedom is the freedom from these rules.

The political theory of Liberalism is based on the concept of extending the boundaries of individual freedom. In the relationship between individual and society the individual should enjoy maximum freedom: freedom of speech, freedom to start a business without restrictions from regulations by the state, freedom to determine one's own life, freedom of organization etc. These individual political freedoms have to be reconciled with the necessity to function within a society. Rousseau explains how this should happen within the concept of the social contract: *"So if the social compact has opponents at the time when it is made, their opposition doesn't invalidate the contract; it merely prevents them from being included in it, making them foreigners among citizens. Once a state has been instituted, residence constitutes consent; to live within its territory is to submit to its sovereignty. Apart from this primal contract, the vote of the majority always binds all the rest. This follows from the contract itself."*¹⁷

The foundation of the liberal political theory are formed by the concept of the separation of powers and the concept of parliamentary democracy.

The concept of the separation of powers arose from an analysis of what form of government can best protect the freedom of the individual: monarchy, republic, despotic reign. French lawyer Charles de Montesquieu (1689-1755) argues: *"When the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person, or in the same body of magistrates, there can be no liberty; because apprehensions may arise, lest the same monarch or senate should enact tyrannical laws, to execute them in a tyrannical manner. Again, there is no liberty if the judiciary power be not separated from the legislative and executive. Were it joined with the legislative, the life and liberty of the subject would be exposed to arbitrary control; for the judge would be then the legislator. Were it joined to the executive power, the judge might behave with violence and oppression."*¹⁸

The separation of power is an institutional guarantee for ensuring that the individual can enjoy his freedom. But the individual should be able to influence the constitution of his government. The slogan of the French Revolution (1789-1799) - "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" – was articulated in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen that was adopted in 1789 by the National Constituent Assembly. The declaration granted voting rights to men (women were excluded) and was a step towards representative democracy. Article 1 states that *"Men are born, and always continue, free, and equal in respect of their rights"*. Article 6 says: *"The law is an expression of the will of the community. All citizens have a right to concur, either personally, or by their representatives, in its formation. It should be the same to all, whether it protects or punishes; and all being*

equal in its sight, are equally eligible to all honours, places, and employments, according to their different abilities, without any other distinction than that created by their virtues and talents."¹⁹

The mechanism of choosing representatives can be different in different countries due to their different histories. But the concept of representative democracy evolved to the point where a parliament is elected through political parties that compete with each other in election. Each party is the expression of the will of a section of the population.

The cultural theory of Liberalism rests on the philosophy of rationalism. The philosophy of rationalism was at the basis of the European Enlightenment. German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) explains that Enlightenment means the liberation of the individual mind from collective pressure to think according to the guidelines of authority of power. He writes: *"Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another. This immaturity is self-incurred if its cause is not lack of understanding, but lack of resolution and courage to use it without the guidance of another. The motto of enlightenment is therefore: Sapere aude! Have courage to use your own understanding!"*²⁰

Many people in Europe relied on others for their thinking, rather than engage in critical thinking of their own. Kant: *"It is so convenient to be immature! If I have a book to have understanding in place of me, a spiritual adviser to have a conscience for me, a doctor to judge my diet for me, and so on, I need not make any efforts at all. I need not think, so long as I can pay; others will soon enough take the tiresome job over for me."*²¹

Kant was struggling with how political and religious authorities had limited freedom of expression to such an extent that people had internalized these limitations and did not care to cultivate a mind of their own. The Enlightenment should be an age where people can freely speak their mind and develop their own thoughts without the interference and guidance from authorities.

Where Kant is cautious in directly attacking religion as an obstacle for the liberation of the mind, French philosophers of the Enlightenment were more radical in their approach. *"Nothing can be more contrary to religion and the clergy than reason and common sense,"* says Voltaire (1694-1778).²² He pointed to the role of religion in knowledge production. Religion exists to keep mankind in line. There is a conflict between religion and reason. Religion produces fanaticism and superstition. Reason produces knowledge and liberates the mind from superstition. Therefore there should be a separation of church and state in a liberal society.

Liberalism developed a view of world history that is summed up in the analysis of German philosopher George Hegel (1770-1831): *"World history [moves] from east to west, from southeast to northwest, from rising to setting. World history has arisen in the southeast, and it has subsided into itself to the northwest."*²³

Western Europe, where capitalism and liberalism have developed, is the place where world history finds its apex. The colonization of the world led to a massive transfer of wealth from the Americas to Western Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. It created a world economy with a global maritime industry, financial sector (insurance, banking) and new industries such as sugar production. The nineteenth century saw the rise of steam power, iron making, the invention of machines and a steep rise in production that led to the term "industrial revolution". Europe led the world civilization to new heights where the rise of individual freedom was connected with the rise in material production, welfare and scientific progress.

Indeed, Europe had colonized the world, but that did not go against the theory of liberalism. *"Despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement, and the means justified by actually effecting that end,"* writes John Stuart Mills. *"Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion."*²⁴ Colonization was a civilization mission of the West, an

attempt to educate and uplift the backward people outside of the West. Mankind had reached a state of development in the West where the principles of liberalism can adequately be implemented. For Europe the colonies formed the white man's burden to civilize the uncivilized world.

Another characteristic of the Liberalist world view is universalism: the idea that what goes for Europe should go for the whole world. The European economic, social, political and cultural system should be an example for the rest of the world.

Liberalism constituted itself as a coherent theoretical framework with key concepts in economic, social relations, politics, culture and world history that explain and justify the rise of colonialism and capitalism: free markets, private ownership of the means of production, individualism versus social control, individual and political freedom, separation of powers and parliamentary democracy, rationalism and the civilizing mission of the West. In Liberalism these were not Western concepts. They were universal concepts, developed in the West, but valid for the rest of the world.

There are variations in these concepts, but the basic framework has been laid by the European Enlightenment as explained above.

1.3 Marxism as a theory of liberation

A major critique of Liberalism came from within the European Enlightenment. German revolutionaries Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) laid the foundation for a radical critique of the ideology and practice of Liberalism: capitalism.

The economic theory of Marxism is based on the concept of social surplus and surplus value. Every society produces goods and services. In a communal society without social classes everybody is involved in the production and gets a share based on their needs. There is no social surplus. When a society produces more than it can consume, then there will be a social surplus. This gives rise to social classes: a class of oppressors that appropriates the social surplus that is produced by the class of the oppressed. The method of appropriation can be with brute force to compel people to work without payment and use them as property that can be bought and sold (slavery), the renting of land by a lord to a vassal who is obliged to transfer parts of his agricultural products to the lord (feudalism) or the use of labour markets in capitalism where the means of production is owned by the capitalist class. The working class who has no means of production (land, machines) is forced to sell its labour power in order to survive.

Capitalism has developed a ingenious way of appropriating the social surplus. Workers have no means of production. These are in the hands of the capitalists. The capitalists have individual freedom, but the workers have no individual freedom because they are forced to sell their labour power to the capitalist. So the liberal concept of individual freedom applies to a small segment of society: the capitalist class.

The worker (male/female) is the producer of goods and services. Suppose he produces a value of 100 units with his labour power. He needs 10 units to survive (consumption). He gets a wage of ten units, but the capitalist gets all the 100 units he has produced. So the capitalist has a surplus value ("profit") of 90 units. But unless he sells the products, he cannot make the profit. The free market enables him to sell his products and get his profits realized. The social surplus now turns into surplus value (profit).

So at the outset there are no brutal forces or oppressive laws to transfer social surplus from the oppressed class to the oppressor class. The combination of private ownership of the means of production with the market ensures this transfer. Capitalism is not an economic system of freedom as Liberalism claims. It is an inherent oppressive system that transfers the value produced by the workers to the capitalists.

The market does not ensure sustainable economic growth and welfare as Liberalism claims. The markets function in such a way that periodic economic crises are inherent to

capitalism. There is not one capitalist operating in the system. There are many capitalists and there is competition. Each capitalist produces for the market independently of other capitalists. At some point together they produce more than the consumers need, so there is periodically an overproduction. Some products cannot be sold. Profit rates fall and the capitalists try to shift their losses to the workers by lay-offs and cuts in wages. Periodical economic crises are intrinsic to the capitalist system and thus contradicts Liberalism that says that capitalism ensures sustainable economic growth.²⁵

The social theory of Marxism rests on the concept of class. Not the individual, but class is the basis of society. The Marxist definition of class is not determined by income or social status. A class is defined in terms of the relationship between people and the means of production. In capitalism the bourgeoisie is the class that owns the means of production and thus controls the labour power of the class of workers that have only their labour to sell in order to survive. Individuals are members of a class.

The nature of a class depends on the mode of production in a society. Marx developed the concept of the mode of production as a historical law that explains how human societies develop: *"In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political, and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness."*²⁶

The material base determines the social, political and intellectual relations. As the material base develops due to technological progress there comes a phase where there is a conflict between the forces behind the progress of the material base and the social, political and intellectual structures that was created. Marx: *"At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or -- what is but a legal expression for the same thing -- with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations a distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic -- in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. This consciousness must be explained rather from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social productive forces and the relations of production."*²⁷

In Liberalism the individual is the main actor in history. In Marxism class is the main actor. The position of the individual is determined by his or her class position. In capitalism the two main classes are the bourgeoisie (capitalist class) and the proletariat (working class). The petty bourgeoisie is the class of owners of the means of production who don't rely on hiring laborers (peasants, artisans and shopkeepers).

The political theory of Marxism focuses on the concept of class struggle. *"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles,"* writes the Communist Manifesto.²⁸ The ruling class has an array of institution to maintain its power. The state (government, political parties, parliament, judiciary, police, intelligence services, army) serves the interest of the bourgeoisie. Freedom in a capitalist society is an illusion. The cultural institutions (media, universities as knowledge producers, educational system) reproduce the bourgeois narratives of liberalism and thus contribute to the illusion of political freedom. The judiciary and parliament are controlled by the capitalist class.

There is no independent judiciary in a class society. There is class justice. There is not political freedom in a parliamentary system. Parliament is a class institution.

The struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat becomes manifest during the periodical crises of capitalism. The bourgeoisie tries to shift the burden of the crisis to the workers with layoffs and wage reduction. This lays the foundation for a revolution. But not every crisis results in a revolution. Russian revolutionary V.I. Lenin (1870-1924) developed Marxist political theory to explain how a crisis can grow into a revolution: *"To the Marxist it is indisputable that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation; furthermore, it is not every revolutionary situation that leads to revolution. What, generally speaking, are the symptoms of a revolutionary situation? We shall certainly not be mistaken if we indicate the following three major symptoms: (1) when it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; when there is a crisis, in one form or another, among the 'upper classes', a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a fissure through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for 'the lower classes not to want' to live in the old way; it is also necessary that 'the upper classes should be unable' to live in the old way; (2) when the suffering and want of the oppressed classes have grown more acute than usual; (3) when, as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses, who uncomplainingly allow themselves to be robbed in 'peace time', but, in turbulent times, are drawn both by all the circumstances of the crisis and by the 'upper classes' themselves into independent historical action."*²⁹

A socialist revolution is impossible without a political vanguard to lead the revolution. Lenin explains: *"We have said that there could not have been Social-Democratic consciousness among the workers. [SH: meaning class consciousness] It would have to be brought to them from without. The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness, i.e., the conviction that it is necessary to combine in unions, fight the employers, and strive to compel the government to pass necessary labour legislation, etc. The theory of socialism, however, grew out of the philosophic, historical, and economic theories elaborated by educated representatives of the propertied classes, by intellectuals. By their social status the founders of modern scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged to the bourgeois intelligentsia. In the very same way, in Russia, the theoretical doctrine of Social-Democracy arose altogether independently of the spontaneous growth of the working-class movement; it arose as a natural and inevitable outcome of the development of thought among the revolutionary socialist intelligentsia."*³⁰

So the function of the vanguard party is to raise the class consciousness of the workers to the point where they are able to understand the necessity for revolutionary transformation. Where Liberalism regards capitalism as the justifiable status quo, Marxism argues that a socialist revolution is inevitable.

The cultural theory of Marxism is based on the concept of scientific socialism. Marxism is considered to be a scientific theory firmly rooted in the European Enlightenment. Before Marxism there was utopian socialism that presented visions of how a socialist society should look like without making a scientific analysis of capitalism. Marxism came with a materialist conception of history (historical materialism) and an economic theory that revealed the mechanism of capitalist exploitation. Friedrich Engels concludes: *"These two great discoveries, the materialistic conception of history and the revelation of the secret of capitalistic production through surplus-value, we owe to Marx. With these discoveries, Socialism became a science."*³¹

Based on a scientific analysis of capitalism and world history Marxism paint the following picture of a socialist society.

The basis of the capitalist economy is private ownership of the means of production and the market mechanism as the engine for production and distribution of goods and service.

The fuel for the engine is the greed of the capitalist for maximum profit. Everything becomes a commodity to be sold on the market.

The basis of the socialist economy is state ownership of the means of production and central planning as the engine for the production and distribution of goods and service. The fuel for the engine is the desire to provide the goods and services that the people need: housing, education, health care etc.

In an analysis of the Parish Commune Marx described the socialist economy as a *"united co-operative societies ... to regulate national production upon common plan, thus taking it under their own control, and putting an end to the constant anarchy and periodical convulsions which are the fatality of capitalist production."*³²

So the basis of the future socialist economy is not the market, but economic planning. The state sets up a planning board that is responsible for producing and distributing goods and services based on the needs of the population and not on the profit drive of private entrepreneurs. Thus you will have investment in health care, education, social infrastructure as a priority in central planning.

The political system of the workers state is not based on political parties in a parliamentary democracy but on a council system in which individuals are elected on the basis of their ambitions to represent a section of society. Councils are elected bodies on a regional and national level. Individuals can stand as candidates in a region (neighborhood, city, state). It is possible that individuals are elected from mass organizations (trade unions, women organization, youth organization) to participate in the process of decision making.

Marx explains the concept on the basis of the experience of the Parish Commune: *"Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to misrepresent the people in Parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workmen and managers in his business."*³³ The model of the Commune was as follows: *"The Commune was formed of the municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in the various wards of the town, responsible and revocable at short terms. The majority of its members were naturally working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class. The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time."*³⁴

Class societies are based on division of labour. Marx: *"The division of labour implies the contradiction between the interest of the separate individual or the individual family and the communal interest of all individuals who have intercourse with one another."*³⁵

In a communist society the social system does away with the division of labour. Marx: *"In communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, herdsman or critic."*³⁶

The intellectual and cultural life is based on science and rational thinking. Religion will disappear when science thrives. Marx mentions in this regard the measures taken by the Parish Commune: *"Having once got rid of the standing army and the police — the physical force elements of the old government — the Commune was anxious to break the spiritual force of repression, the 'parson-power', by the disestablishment and disendowment of all churches as proprietary bodies. The priests were sent back to the recesses of private life, there to feed upon the alms of the faithful in imitation of their predecessors, the apostles. The whole of the educational institutions were opened to the people gratuitously, and at the same time cleared of all interference of church and state. Thus, not only was education made accessible to all, but science itself freed from the fetters which class prejudice and governmental force had imposed upon it."*³⁷

A national revolution is a first step towards an international revolution. The nation-state will give away to an international sister- and brotherhood of men and women. Taking the Parish Commune as a model Friedrich Engels remarks: *"On the same day the foreigners elected to the Commune were confirmed in office, because 'the flag of the Commune is the flag of the World Republic'."*³⁸

Within the Marxist school there is another current that saw reform of capitalism, not the revolutionary overthrow, as the way forward. In 20th century European capitalism seemed to enable reforms (trade unions, electoral law, and judicial system) that created the idea that socialism can be achieved by peaceful means instead of revolution. The proletariat could get political power through elections. Its party – the socialist party – could get the majority of votes and gradually introduce reforms that could do away with most excesses of capitalism (social laws, income distribution etc).

The type of party needed to reform capitalism is a mass party that gains state power through democratic parliamentary elections. The main focus and goal of the party is the winning of these elections. So everybody is welcome to support the party in this electoral endeavor. Once the party has state power, it can bring about the reforms needed to improve the life of the proletariat.

In one of the most advanced capitalist societies in Europe – Germany – the socialists did get political power and did introduce reforms. But they did not introduce a planned economy. They did not abolish capitalism. It was possible to create welfare for the great masses of the proletariat – the welfare state – without overthrowing capitalism. If they did not overthrow capitalism, what then did they do? The answer is: they managed capitalism. According to the reformists they managed capitalism to do away with the excesses of exploitation and oppression. According to the revolutionaries the reformists managed capitalism to prevent revolutions.

Marxism sees capitalism as a progressive force in world history. The Communist Manifesto explains: *"The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilisation. The cheap prices of commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image."*³⁹

Capitalism is bad, but historically speaking it plays a civilizing role in world history by bringing the barbarians into the modern world.

1.4 Western enlightenment in the colonies

1.4.1 Liberalism in the colonies

Liberalism and Marxism arose almost 200 years after the start of Western colonization as part of the European Enlightenment. Western colonization began in 1492 with the occupation of indigenous land in the Americas and genocide on Indigenous people. Since the middle of the seventeenth century another crime against humanity was committed by Europeans: the establishment of the system of trans-Atlantic enslavement. Both crimes uprooted colonized communities in Africa and the Americas and created new oppressive societies on the destruction of old ones. The European Enlightenment could not count on a sympathetic ear of the victims of these crimes.

In Asia (including the so-called Middle East) millennium old civilizations had existed that had confronted Western colonialism and were forced to articulate an answer to the question of how it was possible for these big societies to be overrun and overruled by small groups of Europeans? What is the road to their liberation? Is it a matter of copying

the Enlightenment of the West or rejecting it? Are adaption and modification other options?

In the spring of 1919 the victors of World War I - the Allied forces, among them Britain, France, the US, Russia and Japan - organized a peace conference in Versailles, Paris. Germany, one of the defeated parties, had lost the Chinese territory of Shandong to Japan. Encouraged by US president Woodrow Wilson the Chinese delegates at the conference were hoping to regain control of Shandong. But the European partners of Japan refused to support the Chinese demands and Shandong remained under the control of the Japanese.

When news of the conference decision reached China students from the capital Beijing staged a mass demonstration on the morning of May Fourth 1919 against the Treaty of Versailles. The protest spread across the country and led to the Chinese delegation's refusal to sign the treaty in Paris.

China had been humiliated time and time again by the West. The British had forced the Chinese emperors in two Opium Wars (1839-1842 and 1856-1860) to allow them to import narcotics into China and thus addicting millions of Chinese with the devastating drugs. After the Boxer Rebellion (and the Opium Wars) the Europeans had imposed reparations on China for the cost of the war. The May Fourth demonstrations led to the whole questioning of Chinese identity and fate. It culminated in a new movement, the New Culture Movement, that took up the intellectual challenge to search for the root causes of Chinese misfortune in the modern era.

They found it in Chinese culture. Chinese culture was backward. China needed an Enlightenment like the West. The New Culture Movement posed the old against the new, religion against science, darkness and backwardness against light and progress. They established journals to plead their cause with titles such as *New Youth*, *The New Tide*, *New Education*, *Young China*, *Young World*, *Youth and Society*, *The New Voice of Society*, *New Society*, *The New Man*, *The New Learning*, *The New Culture*, *The New Students*, etc. They argued for individual freedom from the traditional family structure. Chinese society emphasized the family and clan and stressed piety to the family and to the ruler of a backward society. The new society needed individual rights and individual freedom protected by the law. The old society was especially oppressive for women with foot binding as a sad example. Women's liberation became a focal point in their education. Men and women should voluntarily sign an annually-renewable marriage contract. At the time of renewal, either party could choose to nullify the contract. Arranged marriages should be replaced by marriages of love. Supernatural beliefs and faith in religious orders should be replaced by science. The critique of religion was not limited to Chinese ancestor worship, but extended to Christianity. Jesus Christ was just another illegitimate child and the symbol of the cross was a remnant of primitive phallic worship.⁴⁰

The May Fourth Movement and the New Culture Movement were anti-imperialist and anti-colonial, yet they were still rooted in Western Enlightenment and more specifically in Liberalism. China should shred off the old and emulate the West in creating the new.

A similar discussion took place in the Muslim world. "*In the sixteenth century of our era, a visitor from Mars might well have supposed that the human world was on the verge of becoming Muslim,*" writes M. Hodgson in his essay on Islam and world history.⁴¹ Except for the Americas and Oceania Islam ruled in many parts of the world: the so-called Middle East, Asia (India and part of China), Indonesia, Northern Africa, Eastern and Central Europe. At the beginning of the twentieth century Europe had taken over many of these countries through direct or indirect rule. How was this possible and what should be the response of Muslims?

"If people do not shun blind adherence, if they do not seek specially that light which can be found in the Qur'an and the indisputable Hadith, and do not adjust religion and the sciences of today, Islam will become extinct in India," writes Seyd Ahmad Khān (1817-1898).⁴² Khān was an influential Muslim leader in India who had worked for the East India Company. His answer to the decline of Muslim power was to get allied with the new

power and to follow the modern ideas of the West. Islam needed to be reformed in the spirit of the European Enlightenment without the anti-religious element. He founded the Scientific Society of Aligarh to promote western science. Its aims was to promote liberal, modern education and Western scientific knowledge in the Muslim community in India. Scientific works in English and other European languages were translated in Hindi and Urdu. His idea was to *"unite England and India socially even more than politically. The English rule in India, in order to be good, must promise to be eternal; and it can never do so until the English people are known to us as friends and fellow subjects, than as rulers and conquerors."*⁴³ In arts he argued for imitation of English literature. He wrote: *"It is essential that ideas are taken from English poetry and expressed in Urdu."*⁴⁴

He concluded: *"I am in favour of the consolidation of the British Government, not because of any love or loyalty to the British, but only because I see the welfare of the Indian Muslims in that consolidation. And I feel that they can emerge from the present state of decline only with the help of the British government."*⁴⁵

Well into the twentieth century Liberalism found a defender in the South African liberation movement. In a speech in his defence at the Rivonia Trial in June 1964 Nelson Mandela (1918-2013) explained his political creed of Liberalism: *"From my reading of Marxist literature and from conversations with Marxists, I have gained the impression that Communists regard the parliamentary system of the West as undemocratic and reactionary. But, on the contrary, I am an admirer of such a system. The Magna Carta, the Petition of Rights and the Bill of Rights, are documents which are held in veneration by democrats throughout the world. I have great respect for British political institutions, and for the country's system of justice. I regard the British Parliament as the most democratic institution in the world, and the independence and impartiality of its judiciary never fail to arouse my admiration. The American Congress, that country's doctrine of separation of powers, as well as the independence of its judiciary, arouse in me similar sentiments. I have been influenced in my thinking by both West and East."*⁴⁶

1.4.2 Marxism in the colonies

The other school of Western Enlightenment – Marxism - found a large audience after the victory of the Russian revolution of October 1917 (November in the current Gregorian calendar). Marxism predicted that socialism would be established in the highly developed capitalist states of Western Europe. In 1917 a workers state was founded in a society that was overwhelmingly not capitalist. There were a few million workers in a population of around 160 million peasants in Russia. The demand of the majority of the population was not the abolition of private property but the extension of it by the redistribution of land. Small peasants wanted land.

The main theorist and leader of the Russian revolution, Lenin, explains how this is possible within the Marxist theoretical framework.

Although Russia was a peasant country, capitalism was sufficiently developed in certain important regions to create a small but decisive working class. This class needed a vanguard party to organize an alliance between workers and peasants to topple the autocratic tsarist regime. This was possible because this regime came into a crisis which led to more repression and exploitation and ultimately to revolutionary situations in which the ruling power could not rule as they used to and the oppressed masses of workers and peasants were ready and willing to confront the autocratic power in a revolution. This enabled a small proletariat in an underdeveloped capitalist society to take state power and start the transformation to a state of workers and peasant councils. The economy should be based on redistribution of land combined with a planned economy for the industrialization of the country.

Russia was not a colony. But the Russian revolution would exercise a strong appeal to the colonized world where capitalism was underdeveloped. The Russian revolution had showed that a vanguard party is able to lead a revolution in such countries. Furthermore, the October Revolution was the first step in a world revolution in which the highly

developed capitalist countries would fall into the hand of revolutionaries so the international proletariat would change the course of history.

In March 1919 the Russian communists invited their supporters in different parts of the world to establish the Communist International (the Third International). The second congress of 1920 adopted a resolution on the colonial and national question that stated that *"all communist parties must support by action the revolutionary liberation movements in these countries. The form which this support shall take should be discussed with the communist party of the country in question, if there is one. This obligation refers in the first place to the active support of the workers in that country on which the backward nation is financially, or as a colony, dependent."*⁴⁷

Ho Chi Minh, who led the Vietnamese people in the anti-colonial struggle against France and the USA, explains the attractiveness of Marxism for colonized people. Ho Chi Minh lived in Paris after World War I and had joined the French Socialist Party. He describes his move from the Socialist Party to the Communist International: *"The reason for my joining the French Socialist Party was that these 'ladies and gentlemen' – as I called my comrades at that moment – had shown their sympathy towards me, towards the struggle of the oppressed peoples. But I understood neither what was a party, a trade union, nor what was socialism nor communism. Heated discussions were then taking place in the branches of the Socialist Party about the question whether the Socialist Party should remain in the Second International: should a Two and a Half International be founded or should the Socialist Party join Lenin's Third International? I attended the meetings regularly, twice or thrice a week, and attentively listened to the discussion. First, I could not understand thoroughly. Why were the discussions so heated? Either with the Second, Two and a Half or Third International, the revolution could be waged. What was the use of arguing? As for the First International, what had become of it? What I wanted most to know – and this precisely was not debated in the meetings – was: which International sides with the peoples of colonial countries? I raised this question – the most important in my opinion – in a meeting. Some comrades answered: It is the Third, not the Second International. And a comrade gave me Lenin's 'Thesis on the national and colonial questions' published by l'Humanité to read. There were political terms difficult to understand in this thesis. But by dint of reading it again and again, finally I could grasp the main part of it. What emotion, enthusiasm, clear-sightedness and confidence it instilled into me! I wept for joy. Though sitting alone in my room, I shouted out aloud as if addressing large crowds: 'Dear martyrs, compatriots! This is what we need, this is the path to our liberation!'. After that I had entire confidence in Lenin, in the Third International. At first, patriotism, not yet communism, led me to have confidence in Lenin, in the Third International. Step by step, along the struggle, by studying Marxism-Leninism parallel with participation in practical activities, I gradually came upon the fact that only socialism and communism can liberate the oppressed nations and the working people throughout the world from slavery."*⁴⁸

The concept of the vanguard party that can lead a nationalist and socialist revolution in underdeveloped capitalist countries and the infrastructure of the Third International led to the rise of communist parties in different parts of the world. The Marxist narrative of liberation became an important part of the anti-colonial movement in different parts of the world. In Asia, notably China and Vietnam, the vanguard parties became mass movements and led successful revolutions. In Africa (Angola, Mozambique) they led the liberation struggle for independence. In many parts of the world they were a significant part of the struggle against colonialism.

1.5 New narratives of liberation

1.5.1 A decolonial critique of Marxism

In the last quarter of the 20th century the socialist system collapsed in many parts of the world. In 1989 socialism was abolished in Cambodia, Hungary, Poland and Romania. In

1990 Benin, Czechoslovakia, South Yemen, East Germany, Mozambique and Bulgaria followed. In 1991 the socialist system collapsed in Somali, Ethiopia and the Soviet Union. Finally in 1992 Mongolia, Congo-Brazzaville, Albania, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Angola followed suit. In less than four years a large part of the socialist bloc just ceased to exist and capitalism was re-established. The largest socialist society (China) re-introduced the market economy but within the political framework of socialism. The same goes for Vietnam and to a lesser extent to Cuba.

The decline of socialism in the form of social systems elated Liberals cross the world. Their sentiments is expressed by an American neo-conservative, Francis Fukuyama. In 1989, before the formal dissolution of the Soviet Union, he reflected upon the end of the cold war. In a triumphant spirit he wrote: *"What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government. This is not to say that there will no longer be events to fill the pages of Foreign Affairs's yearly summaries of international relations, for the victory of liberalism has occurred primarily in the realm of ideas or consciousness and is as yet incomplete in the real or material world. But there are powerful reasons for believing that it is the ideal that will govern the material world in the long run."*⁴⁹

The fall of the socialist bloc was a big impetus for liberal arrogance to declare the end of history. Eurocentric intellectuals like Fukuyama cannot imagine that history has other avenues than Marxism and Liberalism. It is not the end of history. It is the end of Fukuyama's imagination.

An attempt to articulate a narrative of liberation outside Liberalism and Marxism came from Marxists of color who took a critical look at Marxism. And the critique started well before the downfall of the socialist world system.

Almost four decades after the start of the Russian revolution and more than three decades before its end, the international communist movement received an existential shock. On February 25, 1956 at the 20th congress of the party, three years after the death of Joseph Stalin, the new General Secretary of the Communist Party, Nikita Khrushchev, opened up on the devastating effect of the Stalinist cult of personality and the mass repression in the Soviet Union. He reported: *"Stalin originated the concept 'enemy of the people'. This term automatically made it unnecessary that the ideological errors of a man or men engaged in a controversy be proven. It made possible the use of the cruellest repression, violating all norms of revolutionary legality, against anyone who in any way disagreed with Stalin, against those who were only suspected of hostile intent, against those who had bad reputations... Stalin ... used extreme methods and mass repressions at a time when the Revolution was already victorious, when the Soviet state was strengthened, when the exploiting classes were already liquidated and socialist relations were rooted solidly in all phases of national economy, when our Party was politically consolidated and had strengthened itself both numerically and ideologically."*⁵⁰

The Soviet Union almost lost World War II because Stalin executed many of its most able commanders. The image of socialism as a society for freedom and liberty for the working classes was shattered by Khrushchev's revelations.

Stalinism was presented as a deviation of the promise of socialism. And communists around the world questioned their faith in the communist cause. So did a black communist and artist from French colony of Martinique and a prominent member of the French Communist Party: Aimé Césaire (1913-2008). Césaire resigned from the party and explained his reasons in a letter to Maurice Thorez, the secretary-general of the French Communist Party, dated October 24, 1956. He starts: *"Khrushchev's revelations concerning Stalin are enough to have plunged all those who have participated in communist activity, to whatever degree, into an abyss of shock, pain, and shame... The dead, the tortured, the executed — no, neither posthumous rehabilitations, nor national*

funerals, nor official speeches can overcome them. These are not the kind of ghosts that one can ward off with a mechanical phrase."⁵¹

Césaire expected from the party an honest self-critique and a disassociation with crimes that would exonerate it. The party did nothing of that kind. And then Césaire moves to another reason: *"But as serious as this grievance is — and as sufficient as it is by itself, since it represents the bankruptcy of an ideal and the pathetic illustration of the failure of a whole generation — I want to add a certain number of considerations related to my position as a man of colour."*⁵²

He specified what he meant: *"Our questions (or, if you prefer, the colonial question) cannot be treated as a part of a more important whole, a part over which others can negotiate or come to whatever compromise seems appropriate in light of a general situation, of which they alone have the right to take stock. (Here it is clear that I am alluding to the French Communist Party's vote on Algeria, by which it granted the Guy Mollet-Lacoste government full powers to carry out its North African policy — a circumstance that we have no guarantee will not be replicated in the future.)... It is clear that our struggle — the struggle of colonial peoples against colonialism, the struggle of peoples of color against racism—is more complex, or better yet, of a completely different nature than the fight of the French worker against French capitalism, and it cannot in any way be considered a part, a fragment, of that struggle."*⁵³

There is a third way in the social struggle; one that recognizes the fundamentally different nature of colonial oppression from class oppression: *"Experience, harshly acquired experience, has taught us that we have at our disposal but one weapon, one sole efficient and undamaged weapon: the weapon of unity, the weapon of the anticolonial rallying of all who are willing, and the time during which we are dispersed according to the fissures of the metropolitan parties is also the time of our weakness and defeat."*⁵⁴

Now for the first time a Marxist from the Caribbean refuses to define his or her ideology in terms of Europeans philosophies. In fact, the colonized is now free to criticize the Eurocentric Marxist. Césaire talks about his evaluation of the member of the Party: *"Their inveterate assimilationism; their unconscious chauvinism; their fairly simplistic faith, which they share with bourgeois Europeans, in the omnilateral superiority of the West; their belief that evolution as it took place in Europe is the only evolution possible, the only kind desirable, the kind the whole world must undergo; to sum up, their rarely avowed but real belief in civilization with a capital C and progress with a capital P (as evidenced by their hostility to what they disdainfully call 'cultural relativism'). All these flaws lead to a literary tribe that, concerning everything and nothing, dogmatizes in the name of the party. It must be said that the French communists have had a good teacher: Stalin. Stalin is indeed the very one who reintroduced the notion of "advanced" and "backward" peoples into socialist thinking."*⁵⁵

Césaire wants Marxism and communism to be placed in the service of black peoples, and not black peoples in the service of Marxism and communism. The doctrine and the movement should be made to fit men, not men to fit the doctrine or the movement. The Party offered solidarity with the French people. But Césaire remarks: *"I do not want to erect solidarities in metaphysics. There are no allies by divine right. There are allies imposed upon us by place, time, and the nature of things. And if alliance with the French proletariat is exclusive; if it tends to make us forget or resist other alliances which are necessary and natural, legitimate and fertile; if communism destroys our most invigorating friendships — the friendship uniting us with the rest of the Caribbean, the friendship uniting us with Africa — then I say communism has done us a disservice in making us exchange living fraternity for what risks appearing to be the coldest of cold abstractions."*⁵⁶

The Marxist emphasis on class shut off the reality of the colonized from world history. It does not see the other side of Western civilization in its proper perspective: colonialism. Césaire: *"The fact is that the so-called European civilization — "Western" civilization — as*

it has been shaped by two centuries of bourgeois rule, is incapable of solving the two major problems to which its existence has given rise: the problem of the proletariat and the colonial problem; that Europe is unable to justify itself either before the bar of "reason" or before the bar of "conscience"; and that, increasingly, it takes refuge in a hypocrisy which is all the more odious because it is less and less likely to deceive. Europe is indefensible."⁵⁷

Césaire went through a trajectory of becoming a Marxist, then criticized Marxism and ended up with a new philosophy of liberation that took the colonial influence on the mind of the colonized into account. Many Marxist in other parts of the world followed a similar trajectory, especially after the fall of the Soviet-Union.

Césaire's critique of Marxism was not from a Liberal point of view. His social critique was that apart from class – proletariat and capitalist – there is another relevant social category that defines modern history: the colonized and the colonizer. And the colonizer is not only the European capitalist, but is in the mind of the white working class. The communists themselves had accepted the concept of inferiority and superiority in the notion of advanced and backward people and thus were guilty of the racism that was part of colonialism. Césaire has now often been quoted as one of the founders of decolonial thinking.

Césaire's condemnation of the French Communist Party was published well in advance of the fall of the socialist bloc and even before the massive wave of independence in the early sixties.

1.5.2 Postcolonialism: subaltern studies

Since the eighties of the twentieth century a new school of critics of colonialism arose under the name "postcolonialism". Postcolonialism is a heterogeneous body of thought that deals with race, ethnicity, culture, and human identity in a world in which many colonies had gained their political independence (the post in postcolonialism refers to the era after political independence of many colonies). Postcolonialism looks at the social and cultural dimensions of colonialism.

A Marxist-type of analysis within postcolonialism is subaltern studies. They built on Gramsci's category of "subaltern" that is distinguished from the Marxist category of class. Class is defined by the relationship of people regarding the ownership of means of production. Subaltern scholars struggled with the inadequacy of the Marxist concept of class in dealing with oppressed communities.

Subaltern is rather vague. One of the founders of subaltern studies, Ranajit Guha, uses "subaltern" in combination with the category "elite". Guha: *"The term 'elite' has been used in this statement to signify dominant groups, foreign as well as indigenous. The dominant foreign groups included all the non-Indian, that is, mainly British officials of the colonial state and foreign industrialists, merchants, financiers, planters, landlords and missionaries. The dominant indigenous groups included classes and interests operating at two levels. At the all-India level they included the biggest feudal magnates, the most important representatives of the industrial and mercantile bourgeoisie and native recruits to the uppermost levels of the bureaucracy. At the regional and local levels they represented such classes and other elements as were either members of the dominant all-India groups included in the previous category or if belonging to social strata hierarchically inferior to those of the dominant all-India groups still acted in the interests of the latter and not in conformity to interests corresponding truly to their own social being... The terms 'people' and 'subaltern classes' have been used as synonymous throughout this note. The social groups and elements included in this category represent the demographic difference between the total Indian population and all those whom we have described as the 'elite'. Some of these classes and groups, such as the lesser rural gentry, impoverished landlords, rich peasants and upper-middle peasants who 'naturally' ranked among the 'people' and the 'subaltern', could under certain circumstances act for the 'elite', as explained above, and therefore be classified as such in some local or*

*regional situations - an ambiguity which it is up to the historian to sort out on the basis of a close and judicious reading of his evidence.*⁵⁸

There are no clear criteria of what constitutes a subaltern group other than not belonging to an elite. The Marxist categories of working class, peasantry and capitalist class don't adequately describe the colonial society of India. There is capitalism. There is oppression. However, in the colonial context the peasants and workers are in a similar situation of oppression, marginalization, exploitation and neglect. Their voices are not heard in the narratives of nationalism. Subaltern studies struggles with the inadequacy of the Marxist concept of class in a colonial situation.

1.5.3 Postcolonialism: orientalism

Subaltern studies focuses on social analysis. Another school in postcolonialism – orientalism – focuses on cultural analysis. Edward Said, the founder of this school, takes issues with Marx' concept of the Orient. Said describes orientalism as *"a collective notion identifying 'us' Europeans as against all 'those' non-Europeans, and indeed it can be argued that the major component in European culture is precisely what made that culture hegemonic both in and outside Europe: the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures. There is in addition the hegemony of European ideas about the Orient, themselves reiterating European superiority over Oriental backwardness, usually overriding the possibility that a more independent, or more skeptical, thinker might have had different views on the matter."*⁵⁹

These general ideas of the Western Enlightenment were also embedded in Marxism. He writes: *"Orientalism has been subjected to imperialism, positivism, utopianism, historicism, Darwinism, racism, Freudianism, Marxism, Spenglerism."*⁶⁰ In his analysis of the British occupation of India Marx saw a double mission of British capitalism. One is destructive (breaking the backward barbaric society of oriental despotism) and one is creative: laying the foundation of a modern Western society in Asia. Said criticizes this view: *"In article after article he [Marx] returned with increasing conviction to the idea that even in destroying Asia, Britain was making possible there a real social revolution... Now, sickening as it must be to human feeling to witness those myriads of industrious patriarchal and inoffensive social organizations disorganized and dissolved into their units, thrown into a sea of woes, and their individual members losing at the same time their ancient form of civilization and their hereditary means of subsistence, we must not forget that these idyllic village communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath the traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies... . England, it is true, in causing a social revolution in Hindustan was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in her manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is, can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution."*⁶¹

Said is anti-imperialist and anti-colonial, but he is not a Marxist. He does not use the Marxist conceptual framework in his analysis. He criticizes Marx as being part of the orientalist narrative of the West and for not acknowledging that *"a more independent, or more skeptical, thinker might have had different views on the matter."*

1.5.5 Postcolonialism and decolonial thinking

Postcolonialism explores the boundaries of knowledge beyond the limitations of Liberalism and Marxism. Subaltern studies acts within the Marxist framework but struggles with the limitations of a social theory based on class. Orientalism pushes the Marxist narrative in a general narrative of Western superiority and opens the door to be anti-imperialist without being a Marxist. And from there, many scholars and activists in the realm of postcolonialism began to discover thinkers like Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon (and many others) who had already analyzed colonialism and its legacy outside

the Western narratives of liberation and Marxism. They incorporated their contributions in postcolonial analysis.

At the beginning of the 21st century a shift occurred from social and cultural analysis of colonialism to a fundamental critique of knowledge production under the name of decolonial thinking. Postcolonialism suggests that colonialism does not exist anymore. It is post; it is over.

DTM asserts that colonialism is not over. It still exists, although not in its political manifestation of colonized countries that are administered by colonizer countries. Latin American scholars took up the issue by placing colonialism in the context of modernity. Walter Mignolo: *"Modernity is the name for the historical process in which Europe began its progress toward world hegemony. It carries a darker side, coloniality."*⁶² In the Liberal and Marxist tradition the concept of modernity is associated with the progress of human civilization, the rise of science and technology, the triumph of reason above superstition. But *"The 'discovery' of America and the genocide of Indians and African slaves are the very foundation of 'modernity', more so than the French or Industrial Revolutions. Better yet, they constitute the darker and hidden face of modernity, 'coloniality'."*⁶³

The continuation of that darker side is in the structures that arose out of the foundation of modernity and still exist today. The political and economic structures are called colonialism, while the social and cultural ones are called coloniality. Anibal Quijano explains: *"Coloniality of power was conceived together with America and Western Europe, and with the social category of 'race' as the key element of the social classification of colonized and colonizers. Unlike in any other previous experience of colonialism, the old ideas of superiority of the dominant, and the inferiority of dominated under European colonialism were mutated in a relationship of biologically and structurally superior and inferior."*⁶⁴

Both Mignolo and Quijano still use the colonial concept of modernity and point to its darker side: coloniality. From my DTM perspective there is no need to cling to a concept that was introduced by the colonizer. The lives of hundreds of millions of colonized people were destroyed by colonialism in a gruesome way (see **paragraph x.x** for a more detailed analysis of the atrocities and the cost in human lives of colonialism). From the perspective of the colonized the phase of world history since 1492 is more aptly described by the term "barbarism". For the victims there was no other side of barbarism: they only knew one side. For the colonizer there were two sides: modernity in his world and barbarism in the world of the colonized.

The cultural structures of colonialism have a deep impact on knowledge production. Western knowledge has become the basis for administering society in all its aspects: the economy, the social institution, the technology, the educational system, the cultural institutions, even in social movements. And not only in the West but across the globe.

Western knowledge claims objectivity and universality. It also claims its superiority in relation to knowledge produced outside the West, that is regarded as inferior.

Decolonial thinkers analyze how colonialism has impacted knowledge production. Quijano looks at how race has impacted European knowledge production as Césaire had done half a century ago. Ramon Grosfoguel elaborates and extends the influence of race to the position from which one speaks in knowledge production: *"In Western philosophy and sciences the subject that speaks is always hidden, concealed, erased from the analysis. The 'ego-politics of knowledge' of Western philosophy has always privilege the myth of a non-situated 'Ego'. Ethnic/racial/gender/sexual epistemic location and the subject that speaks are always decoupled. By delinking ethnic/racial/gender/sexual epistemic location from the subject that speaks, Western philosophy and sciences are able to produce a myth about a Truthful universal knowledge that covers up, that is, conceals who is speaking as well as the geo-political and body-political epistemic location in the structures of colonial power/knowledge from which the subject speaks."*⁶⁵

Objectivity and universality are the smokescreen behind which knowledge is produced to sustain colonial power. This knowledge is not only produced in the West. Enrique Dussel explains: *"Colonial elites were ... systematically trained in the imperialist center. Oxford, Cambridge, and Paris were transformed into theaters of "reeducation," of brainwashing, until well into the twentieth century. The colonial oligarchies were brown, black, or yellow, and they aped the philosophy they had learned abroad. True puppets, they repeated in the periphery what their eminent professors of the great metropolitan universities had propounded. In Cairo, Dakkar, Saigon, and Peking - as in Buenos Aires and Lima - they taught their pupils the ego cogito in which they themselves remained constituted as an idea or thought, entities at the disposal of the 'will to power', impotent, dominated wills, castrated teachers who castrated their pupils."*⁶⁶

They did not only learn knowledge in the colonizers way. They learned to look down on knowledge produced by the civilizations they originated from. Dussel: *"These colonized philosophers had forgotten their past. The Arab world did not return to its own splendid philosophy dating back to the ninth century. India was ashamed of its sages and so was China, though both nations had produced treasures of thought for more than three millennia."*⁶⁷

The Latin American critique on Eurocentric knowledge production was echoed in the rest of the world, from Asia to Africa, from the USA to Europe. Boaventura de Souza from Portugal points to the possibility of a reverse situation: Europe could learn from the colonized world. De Souza: *"Europe as it is today (and I am not referring only to the current financial, political and social crisis within the European Union) has little or nothing to teach the world. Moreover, it does not even have a socially acceptable and fair solution for its own domestic problems. It would be advantageous for Europe to learn from the experiences of the rest of the world, yet five centuries of colonialism seem to have made it incapable of learning from those it has always considered inferior. This is the tragedy of Europe and also a tragedy for the world, given that a Eurocentric ideology still predominates worldwide."*⁶⁸

1.6 Conclusion

Liberalism and Marxism are two narratives of liberation that came out of Western Enlightenment. They found an established place in the academia. Liberalism is the narrative of the ruling powers in much of the world. Marxism has lost its significance after the disintegration of the socialist bloc.

Decolonial theory is a critique of Western Enlightenment. But it goes beyond the critique of Eurocentrism. In different parts of the globe decolonial thinkers and activists are developing a body of thought that can now be regarded as a third narrative of liberation, as an alternative for Liberalism and Marxism.

In the next chapters I bring some of these contributions together in a theoretical framework of Decolonizing The Mind (DTM). I will start with decolonial epistemology: the fundamentals of knowledge production.

2. A DTM theory of knowledge and lies

2.1 Introduction

Why is epistemology, the theory of knowledge, so important? Because the theory of knowledge provides us with guidelines about what is valid knowledge and what is not. Valid knowledge makes the distinction between true or false and between right or wrong. Valid knowledge is codified in science and entrusts authority to knowledge producers. Valid knowledge is scientific knowledge.

People act daily on valid knowledge. This knowledge gives them rules on how to act and how to behave. Valid knowledge gives you the assurance that your acts and behaviour are justified. Invalid knowledge does the reverse. You don't want to act and behave on invalid knowledge.

Valid knowledge is disseminated through the cultural system (education, media, etc). People spend their whole life acquiring valid knowledge. They go through the educational system. They learn through media and culture what valid knowledge is.

Valid knowledge is not only used by individuals and social groups, but by policy making bodies, from governments till the smallest units of policy makers. Those policies affect the daily lives of people.

What happens if there are differences of opinion about what constitutes valid knowledge? And what happens if these differences are related to colonialism?

Take the example of Christopher Columbus. Was he a hero or a criminal? What is the correct answer to this question? Is there a correct answer? Is it a matter of perspectives? Is there one truth or are there multiple truths? Is it possible to have multiple conflicting truths?

In the Eurocentric historiography Columbus was a scientist, a discoverer. The world should honour his contribution to science and progress. And the colonized world does, because there are more than 600 monuments erected across the globe in tribute of Columbus.⁶⁹

In the decolonial historiography Columbus is a criminal, the one who opened the door to genocide and enslavement of the indigenous people of the Americas and the European enslavement of Africans. The 600 monuments should be brought down and destroyed and his crimes should be exposed in the textbooks on the history of the world.

The question "Was Columbus a hero or criminal" has everything to do with the question: "What is valid knowledge?" What are the considerations that lead one school to consider him a hero and another to regard him as a criminal? Whose considerations are valid? And what constitutes validity?

2.2 The canon of Eurocentric knowledge

2.2.1 The precursor to the canon

There is now a canon of Eurocentric epistemology that is being taught in universities around the globe. This canon exposes a theory and methodology on how to produce scientific knowledge. It is accepted and promoted as the correct and the only way to produce scientific knowledge. Before I explain and discuss the canon I will describe its history.

In Eurocentric science epistemology has evolved in opposition to Christian theology. Most philosophers and scientists who established western sciences were not atheist. Isaac Newton (1642-1726), one of the founder of Western mathematics and physics, was a devout Christian. Georg Hegel (1770-1831), a major figure in Enlightenment philosophy,

was a religious man. But as Western science developed it became involved in a struggle with the church.

The case of Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) became instructive for how the church blocked the development of science. In 1610 Galilei published a treatise in which he describes his observations with a new telescope of the movement of planets and the sun in the planetary system. He concluded that the earth orbits around the sun contrary to the teachings of the church. He thereby endorsed the same conclusion that Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) had reached earlier. In India Nilakantha Somayaji (1444-1544) had developed a computational model before Copernicus with the same result. In reaction to Galilei's publication the church banned his book. Later he was brought to trial and was found guilty of heresy. He was sentenced to indefinite imprisonment till his death. Less fortunate was Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) who was burned alive by the church for advocating the same theory earlier.

For later generations of Western scientists this was the ultimate proof that religion blocked the development of science thought. The institutional control of the church over knowledge production prevented free thinking and thus obstructed the development of science. In India Nilakantha Somayaji, a Hindu astronomer and mathematician, died a peaceful death at the age of hundred without imprisonment or repression in other ways. Hinduism did not prevent the development of science as Christianity did in Europe.

In those days theologians were the authority of knowledge. Questioning their authority was dangerous. The result of some of these theological research seems ludicrous today because now scientists are the authority of knowledge. Take the case of establishing the day of the creation of the universe.

The Bible taught that God has created the universe in six days and rested on the seventh. Several theologians used the Bible to calculate the exact day of the creation of the universe. The most well-known is the chronology established by the Irish archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656). On the basis of the biographies of the different individuals mentioned in the bible he constructed a genealogy from Adam and Eve to the birth of Christ. In the Bible the individuals could become several hundreds years of age. Ussher concluded that God created the universe (including life) on October 22, 4004 BCE. Most people now would probably laugh at this conclusion, but in those days it was considered serious knowledge because the authority of knowledge were theologians, not scientists as we know them today.

In Europe science had to cast away the burden of Christian theology in the form of repression of research in order to advance. The philosophical discussion in the Enlightenment was connected to the political struggle against the alliance of the church with the autocratic establishment. That political struggle resulted in the separation of the state from the church. In science knowledge production resulted in the separation of knowledge from ethics and moved towards atheism. In theology knowledge was about true or false and about right or wrong, about facts and analysis on the one hand and about ethics on the other.

Science removed ethics from knowledge production and claimed that true or false could be established independent from right or wrong. This was done in five steps.

The first step was to argue that knowledge is derived from experience, not from religious texts. British philosopher John Locke (1632-1704) develops the argument: *"These two are the fountains of knowledge, from whence all the ideas we have, or can naturally have, do spring. The objects of sensation is one source of ideas. First, our Senses, conversant about particular sensible objects, do convey into the mind several distinct perceptions of things, according to those various ways wherein those objects do affect them. And thus we come by those ideas we have of yellow, white, heat, cold, soft, hard, bitter, sweet, and all those which we call sensible qualities... This great source of most of the ideas we have, depending wholly upon our senses, and derived by them to the understanding, I call SENSATION.... The other fountain from which experience furnisheth the understanding with ideas is... when the soul comes to reflect on and consider, do furnish the*

understanding with another set of ideas, which could not be had from things without. And such are perception, thinking, doubting, believing, reasoning, knowing, willing, and all the different actings of our own minds;- which we being conscious of, and observing in ourselves, do from these receive into our understandings as distinct ideas as we do from bodies affecting our senses... As I call the other SENSATION, so I call this REFLECTION."⁷⁰

So observation and reasoning leads to scientific knowledge. I will illustrate this with the following example. If I take an open bottle with water and turn it upside down, I can observe that the water falls out of the bottle down to the ground. If I repeat this ten times, I can see ten times the same result. Through reasoning I come to the conclusion: every time you turn an open bottle with water upside down, the water will fall out of the bottle down to the ground. Now you can safely predict that the water will fall out of the bottle. That is new knowledge that you have produced through observation and reasoning.

The second step was to argue that something more is needed than observation and reasoning to produce new knowledge: analysis and theory. Observation and reasoning tells you what is happening: "if you turn an open bottle with water upside down, the water will fall out." It does not tell you why this is happening. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) concludes: *"Although all our cognition commences with experience, yet it does not on that account all arise from experience."*⁷¹ A theoretical analysis can give you this answer. And the answer is that there are laws of nature that need to be discovered and that can explain the observations. Such a law is the law of gravity. This law explains why water falls down instead of going up, and in general why objects move to or from each other. There is something called gravitational force that explains this. Theoretical knowledge is new knowledge that is separate from practical, empirical, knowledge.

The third step is to use the theoretical knowledge to predict the outcome of experience. The theory of the law of gravity teaches us that there is a situation possibly where the gravitational force is absent, like in a space ship in outer space. Then if you turn a bottle with water upside down, the water might go up instead of down. You can predict this and create new knowledge not because of observation, but because of a correct theory. In a cryptic way this is how George Hegel's famous quote *"All that is rational is real, and all that is real is rational"* should be understood.⁷² If a theory (the rational) provides a correct explanation of reality (the real), then reality can be predicted by the theory. If the theory of gravity is correct, then it predicts that in a situation of weightlessness water might not fall down but go up.

By now knowledge production is a process of observation and reasoning (what happened), followed by theoretical analysis (why did it happen) and testing of theories (what will happen according to the theory). Locke, Kant and Hegel were Christians. At this stage scientific knowledge was not explicitly atheist.

The fourth step was the actual separation of theology from science. August Comte (1798-1857) introduces the notion of scientific knowledge as the highest stage in the development of the human intellect. Comte distinguishes between three stages in the development of human knowledge: *"In the theological state, the human mind, seeking the essential nature of beings, the first and final causes (the origin and purpose) of all effects - in short, Absolute knowledge - supposes all phenomena to be produced by the immediate action of supernatural beings. In the metaphysical state, which is only a modification of the first, the mind supposes, instead of supernatural beings, abstract forces, veritable entities (that is, personified abstractions) inherent in all beings and capable of producing all phenomena. What is called the explanation of phenomena is, in this stage, a mere reference of each to its proper entity. In the final, the positivists state, the mind has given over the vain search after Absolute notions, the origin and the destination of the universe, and the causes of phenomena, and applies itself to the study of their laws - that is their invariable relations of succession and resemblance. Reasoning and observation, are the means of this knowledge."*⁷³ Positivism guided epistemology from religion through philosophy to atheism.

The last step is to apply positivism to both the natural and the social world. There is no right or wrong in mathematics or astronomy, only true and false. If social sciences uses the same method of knowledge production as natural sciences, then it is logical to state that also in social sciences ethics should be separated from knowledge.

The Marxist theory of knowledge is in essence in accordance with this approach. "*Sense perception ... must be the basis of all science,*" says Marx.⁷⁴ The same methods should be used for natural and social sciences: "*Natural science will in time incorporate into itself the science of man, just as the science of man will incorporate into itself natural science: there will be one science... The social reality of nature, and human natural science, or the natural science of man, are identical terms.*"⁷⁵ The purpose of science is to discover the natural that govern the natural world and the social laws that govern the social world.

Ultimately the intellectual development in European epistemology had led to a canon that is now being taught in universities in all parts of the world. Before I provide a critical analysis of Eurocentric epistemology, I will describe this canon.

2.2.2 The canon of Eurocentric epistemology

I will present the canon of Eurocentric epistemology through a textbook that puts its main tenets in a classical way: *Anol Bhattacharjee - Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practices*.⁷⁶ Similar textbooks can be found in every university.

Etymologically, the word "science" is derived from the Latin word *scientia*, which means knowledge. Bhattacharjee starts: "*The purpose of science is to create scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge refers to a generalized body of laws and theories to explain a phenomenon or behaviour of interest that are acquired using the scientific method. Laws are observed patterns of phenomena or behaviours, while theories are systematic explanations of the underlying phenomenon or behaviour.*"⁷⁷

How do you acquire scientific knowledge? By using the scientific method. What is the scientific method?

Bhattacharjee: "*Scientific method refers to a standardized set of techniques for building scientific knowledge, such as how to make valid observations, how to interpret results, and how to generalize those results. The scientific method allows researchers to independently and impartially test pre-existing theories and prior findings, and subject them to open debate, modifications, or enhancements. The scientific method must satisfy four characteristics:*

- *Replicability: Others should be able to independently replicate or repeat a scientific study and obtain similar, if not identical, results.*
- *Precision: Theoretical concepts, which are often hard to measure, must be defined with such precision that others can use those definitions to measure those concepts and test that theory.*
- *Falsifiability: A theory must be stated in a way that it can be disproven. Theories that cannot be tested or falsified are not scientific theories and any such knowledge is not scientific knowledge. A theory that is specified in imprecise terms or whose concepts are not accurately measurable cannot be tested, and is therefore not scientific.*
- *Parsimony: When there are multiple explanations of a phenomenon, scientists must always accept the simplest or logically most economical explanation. This concept is called parsimony or "Occam's razor." Parsimony prevents scientists from pursuing overly complex or outlandish theories with endless number of concepts and relationships that may explain a little bit of everything but nothing in particular.*"⁷⁸

There are two methods of scientific research: induction and deduction. "*In inductive research, the goal of a researcher is to infer theoretical concepts and patterns from observed data. In deductive research, the goal of the researcher is to test concepts and patterns known from theory using new empirical data. Hence, inductive research is also called theory-building research, and deductive research is theory-testing research. Note*

here that the goal of theory-testing is not just to test a theory, but possibly to refine, improve, and extend it."⁷⁹

These two methods are often combined in an iterative research cycle of observation, rationalization and validation: "In the **observation phase**, we observe a natural or social phenomenon, event, or behaviour that interests us. In the **rationalization phase**, we try to make sense of the observed phenomenon, event, or behaviour by logically connecting the different pieces of the puzzle that we observe, which in some cases, may lead to the construction of a theory. Finally, in the **validation phase**, we test our theories using a scientific method through a process of data collection and analysis, and in doing so, possibly modify or extend our initial theory."⁸⁰

The same scientific method is used for all knowledge. There is no different approach for knowledge about nature and knowledge about human beings. "Science can be grouped into two broad categories: natural science and social science. Natural science is the science of naturally occurring objects or phenomena, such as light, objects, matter, earth, celestial bodies, or the human body. Natural sciences can be further classified into physical sciences, earth sciences, life sciences, and others. Physical sciences consist of disciplines such as physics (the science of physical objects), chemistry (the science of matter), and astronomy (the science of celestial objects). Earth sciences consist of disciplines such as geology (the science of the earth). Life sciences include disciplines such as biology (the science of human bodies) and botany (the science of plants). In contrast, social science is the science of people or collections of people, such as groups, firms, societies, or economies, and their individual or collective behaviours. Social sciences can be classified into disciplines such as psychology (the science of human behaviours), sociology (the science of social groups), and economics (the science of firms, markets, and economies)."⁸¹

One can also classify science on the basis of its purpose: "Basic sciences, also called pure sciences, are those that explain the most basic objects and forces, relationships between them, and laws governing them. Examples include physics, mathematics, and biology. Applied sciences, also called practical sciences, are sciences that apply scientific knowledge from basic sciences in a physical environment. For instance, engineering is an applied science that applies the laws of physics and chemistry for practical applications such as building stronger bridges or fuel efficient combustion engines, while medicine is an applied science that applies the laws of biology for solving human ailments."⁸²

Finally, science can be classified on the basis of the level on which it operates: "The theoretical level is concerned with developing abstract concepts about a natural or social phenomenon and relationships between those concepts (i.e., build "theories"), while the empirical level is concerned with testing the theoretical concepts and relationships to see how well they reflect our observations of reality, with the goal of ultimately building better theories."⁸³

Science is based on rationalism, because it regards reason (derived from the Latin word "ratio") as the source of knowledge. It is not based on a belief in a metaphysical entity that provides humans with knowledge nor on fantasies or conjectures. And reason uses the scientific method to gain knowledge.

This scientific framework acknowledges that there might be a bias in scientific research: "Theories may have implicit cultural assumptions (e.g., whether they apply to individualistic or collective cultures), temporal assumptions (e.g., whether they apply to early stages or later stages of human behaviour), and spatial assumptions (e.g., whether they apply to certain localities but not to others). If a theory is to be properly used or tested, all of its implicit assumptions that form the boundaries of that theory must be properly understood. Unfortunately, theorists rarely state their implicit assumptions clearly, which leads to frequent misapplications of theories to problem situations in research."⁸⁴

This is in a nutshell the Eurocentric theory of knowledge. Knowledge is acquired by observation (data collection) and reasoning (induction, deduction, validation). Millions of scholars have studied this epistemological framework and are using it everyday.

What can possibly be wrong with the canon of Eurocentric epistemology? In order to explain my critique from a DTM perspective, I will introduce a basic framework for a DTM epistemology: conceptual thinking.

2.3 A framework for a DTM epistemology: conceptual thinking

I define knowledge in general as *"insights and understanding about the natural and social world as expressed in concepts that describe and explain certain aspects of the social or natural world."*

Central in this definition is the notion of a concept. A concept is an idea that describes and explains certain aspects of the social and natural world. Knowledge is contained in concepts. The concept is the basic unit of knowledge.

A concept consists of five elements. I will describe these elements with the example of two related concepts: the Eurocentric concept of *"the discovery of the Americas"* and the DTM concept of *"the first European crime against humanity"*. These are two concepts that deal with the same phenomenon: how to portray and understand the historical process that started in 1492 with the actions of Columbus.

The first element of a concept is terminology. A concept is captured in a term or a combination of terms. A term is a linguistic expression of a concept. The term *"discovery"* is the essence of the Eurocentric concept and the term *"crime against humanity"* captures the real meaning of the DTM concept. But the concept is more than the terms.

The second element of a concept is observation. An observation is a collection of facts about the object of knowledge production. There can be a dispute about what constitutes a fact, but basically it means gathering information about the object of knowledge. In this example the object of knowledge is the historical process that started in 1492 with the actions of Columbus.

The Eurocentric concept of the discovery of the Americas contains observations regarding a misguided journey of Christopher Columbus. He wanted to find a new sea route to India and China by sailing westward instead of the usual eastern passage. Accidentally he ended up in the Americas without realizing that he had encountered a world that was unknown to Europeans.

The DTM concept of a crime against humanity is based on observations regarding the brutal acts of genocide against the indigenous people, the illegal occupation of their land and the ensuing trans-Atlantic kidnapping and massive enslavement of Africans by Europeans. The descriptive element of a concept answers a question like what happened?

The third element of a concept is analysis. The observations are the descriptive part of a concept. But a concept does not only describe the natural and social reality. It also explains this reality in order to understand it. The analysis offers a framing and a storyline with a certain logic that makes us understand why the natural and social reality is how it is and how it has developed.

The analysis in the Eurocentric concept of discovery is that the journey of Columbus was about science: the curiosity about finding a new route to Asia led to the discovery of new lands. The concept of discovery speaks from a particular position: the position of Europeans. It does not acknowledge the position of the indigenous people of the Americas who did not need any discovery to find out that their land was theirs. It does not acknowledge a crime against humanity.

The analysis in the DTM concept of a crime against humanity is that the Europeans, because of greed, committed brutal acts of genocide and massive enslavement of the

indigenous people with the occupation of their land. This concept also speaks from a particular position: the position of the indigenous people. But it acknowledges that there is another position, that of the perpetrator of the crime against humanity, who presents a crime against humanity as a virtue of scientific discovery.

The fourth element of a concept is theory. A concept is often related to other concepts. A theory is a collection of interrelated concepts that provides a bigger picture of the natural and social reality. One part of reality is often connected to other parts. The concept of *discovery* is connected with the theory of the rise of world civilization that brought progress, science, technology and modernity. The concept of *a crime against humanity* is connected with the concept of barbarism and the decline of humanity and world civilization. Progress for a small minority of the world population was connected with oppression, exploitation and dehumanization of the overwhelming part of the world population.

The fifth element is ethics. Often a description and analysis contains ethics, a value judgment about what is right or wrong. Knowledge is not only about true or false, but also about good and bad. The concept of *discovery* offers a value judgment, an appreciation of what happened to the Americas and world civilization. The concept of *a crime against humanity* presents a critique and indignation of that process. The ethical component has practical consequences. If you appreciate Columbus as a hero of progress, you erect a monument. If you think he is a criminal responsible for a crime against humanity you would bring down the monument. The practical implications of a concept are inherently linked to the ethics of a concept. With ethics comes emotion. With the concept of "discovery" comes the emotion of pride of achievement. With the concept of "crime against humanity" comes the emotion of anger and indignation. So knowledge is also about emotions.

The notion of a concept is instrumental in our critique of Eurocentric epistemology. Our critique of the canon consists of three points:

1. The Eurocentric epistemology does not distinguish between knowledge and lies and thus it is not able to recognize lies that presents itself as knowledge. It does not acknowledge the colonization of the mind.
2. The Eurocentric epistemology uses the same research methods for knowledge about human society and knowledge about the natural world and thus its epistemology is not able to grasp the essence of human relations.
3. The Eurocentric epistemology is based on two-value logic (true or false) and thus is not able to understand the logic of social and natural processes.

2.4 The production of lies

2.4.1 Truth, lies and the colonization of the mind

For Eurocentrism the subject of epistemology is knowledge, and more specifically the search for the truth. Different schools of thought have come up with different theories about truth. How do we know what truth is? How do we construct valid knowledge? Can we trust our senses? Is there a universal truth? Are we dreaming about our existence or do we really exist? Prof. Stephen Small from the University of California Berkeley, when referring to white narratives about European enslavement of Africans, used to say: "*We might not know what the truth is, but we certainly know what lies are!*" DTM epistemology is not only about truth, but also about lies that have been constructed to justify colonialism. What are the mechanisms of constructing lies as a means to colonize the mind? That is a legitimate subject of DTM epistemology, because it is a mechanism of the colonization of the mind. It is absent in the Eurocentric epistemology.

British philosopher Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) says: "*Our knowledge of truths ... has an opposite, namely error.*"⁸⁵ He is wrong. The opposite of truths are lies. The difference

between a lie and an error is that an error should be corrected, while a lie should be opposed. An error is a false statement in an effort to find the truth. A lie is a false statement in an effort to block the truth. Once you realise that there is an error, you will try to correct it. A lie is produced with the intent to manipulate the mind. A lie comes in the form of a fantasy, something that is just made up and presented as a depiction of reality.

In Eurocentric epistemology the lie is not part of the theory of knowledge. Researchers are innocent. They are honest and act with integrity. There is no conscious attempt to produce lies. That would go against the real meaning of science that aims to seek the truth.

In Eurocentrism the scientific method produces "objective" knowledge. In dealing with the relationship between object and subject of knowledge Anol Bhattacharjee says that *"theorists rarely state their implicit assumptions clearly, which leads to frequent misapplications of theories to problem situations in research."*⁸⁶ In the Eurocentric epistemology there is a clear distinction between object (what is researched) and subject of knowledge (the researcher). The outcome of the research is independent of the opinion or position of the researcher. Whether the scientist, the subject, is black or white, European or African, colonized or colonizer, does not matter for the outcome of research. That outcome is objective. If there is a bias, then that is because the scientist has not specified possible cultural assumptions. But that can easily be dealt with by specifying the assumptions.

When you speak about truths and errors, there is no emotion involved. But when you talk about lies, there is the emotion of deceit, dishonesty and trickery. Can we leave emotions aside and talk about different perspectives instead of lies? Yes, we can. But why should we distort reality and deny that there are lies?

Suppose we would apply this logic to the Holocaust. How would it sound if people who deny the Holocaust are characterized as people with a different perspective? It would invoke an emotional reaction of indignation that Holocaust denial would have the same legitimacy in knowledge production as any other view on the Holocaust. A lie should not be treated as legitimate knowledge. In some countries such as Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia and Spain the denial of the Holocaust is punishable by law. Whether the state should be the judge of what truth and lies are, remains open for discussion. But that there are lies, is something that cannot be denied.

Eurocentrism states that cultural assumptions can create a bias. In DTM the problem is not with the cultural assumptions of the subject, but with the position of the subject in a system of power. In Eurocentric epistemology knowledge production stands on its own. It is not related to power. The researcher means well. Nobody can force him or her to produce knowledge in a specific way even if it challenges power. Whatever knowledge (s)he produces, it has nothing to do with the position of the subject in a system of power. That is why errors are possible but lies are excluded from Eurocentric epistemology.

In DTM epistemology the lies are not about the intentions of individuals, although individuals carry these intentions. The lies are produced from a system of knowledge production that serves colonialism. The production of lies are connected with a global system that connects economics, political power and social relations with culture. Knowledge production is part of culture. If errors are found in research, then in a proper system of knowledge production the errors would first be admitted and then be corrected. But if lies are produced, then power comes into play to prevent the exposure of lies and maintain the system of production of lies. Hypocrisy is inherent in the creation of lies. The claim of objectivity goes against the refusal to fight lies.

The question is: how do we deal with lies in science? In Eurocentric epistemology the lie is not acknowledge as part of knowledge production. There are no mechanisms in Eurocentric epistemology to detect lies, because the concept of error has replaced the

concept of lie. In the DTM epistemology we analyse the mechanisms of the colonizing of the mind. So the detection of lies is an important part of the work in DTM.

The question of how to find the truth remains important. But there is an acknowledgement in DTM that Eurocentrism has produced a branch of "knowledge" that is carefully constructed as lies, but presented as knowledge. One major challenge in DTM epistemology is to analyse how the lies are constructed and which mechanisms are used in manipulating knowledge and thus in colonizing the mind. The notion of a concept helps us to distinguish between errors, truths and lies.

The five elements of a concept are treated differently in an error, a lie and a truth. They have to be understood in relation to each other.

1. Terminology. In search of the truth you develop a terminology that is an adequate representation of the object of knowledge. If you make an error and you use a term that does not adequately represent the concept, you correct that and use another term once you realise the error. If you produce a lie, you intentionally come up with a term that is not an adequate representation, yet you use an inadequate term because you want to paint a different picture of the object that does not correspond with reality.
2. Observations (facts). In search of the truth you take all relevant facts into account that relate to the concept. If you make an error, you might mistakenly leave out facts, but once you realise that, you make a correction and include these facts in developing the concept. If you produce a lie, you select facts that fit into your concept and intentionally leave out or twist the facts that contradict your concept.
3. Analysis. The analysis offers a framing and a storyline that makes us understand the concept. In search of the truth you develop a framing and a storyline that matches the facts and provides a logical explanation of the concept. If you make an error in the storyline, you correct it by adapting the storyline so it matches the facts and logic. If you produce a lie, you intentionally develop a storyline that matches your concept and manipulates the facts and logic so as to suit the concept. If you need to fantasise, then you put the fantasies into the storyline.
4. Theory. A theory is a collection of interrelated concepts that provides a bigger picture of the natural and social reality. In search for the truth you put your concept in the context of a theory that provides a factual and logical extension of the storyline of the concept. If you make an error, you correct it by looking for a theory that better matches the facts and logics of the bigger narrative. If you produce a lie, you select a theory that extends the storyline of your concept despite the facts and the logic that go against the theory.
5. Ethics. A concept often contains ethics, a value judgment about what is right or wrong, good or bad. In searching the truth you acknowledge the ethics, make it explicit and defend your position. If you make an error, you correct it by acknowledging the ethics, make it explicit and move on. If you produce a lie, you hide or disguise the ethics by presenting your concept as objective and devoid from ethics.

2.4.2 An example of the construction of lies presented as knowledge

I will take as an example the studies by Hugh Thomas, a British historian who wrote a three-volume study on the Spanish empire. He uses the concept of "discovery" to describe and explain the actions of the Spaniards since 1492. The indigenous people of the Americas use the concept of "a crime against humanity". They state: *"The Indigenous People very well may have had a much better future then and history now if Christopher Columbus had perished in the Atlantic."*⁸⁷

Why is the concept of "the discovery" a lie? I will use the methodology that I have described above and apply it to the work of Hugh Tomas.

2.4.2.1 The terminology

Terms are linguistic expressions of concepts. Thomas talks about the "age of discovery", a "voyage of discovery", the "discovery of the Indies", the "discovery of South America", the "discovery of the Americas".⁸⁸ The term "discovery" covers up a crime against humanity and the occupation and exploitation of land that belongs to the indigenous people of the Americas. That is why it is a lie. The term "discovery" is connected with other terms that convey the same message: the Spanish colonizers brought progress to the world. These terms are found in the titles of the series. The first volume is titled: *Rivers of Gold. The rise of the Spanish empire, from Columbus to Magellan*. The second: *The Golden Empire. Spain, Charles V, and the Creation of America*. The third: *World Without End. The global empire of Philip II*.⁸⁹

A decolonial historian would speak of *Rivers of Blood* instead of *Rivers of Gold* or about the *Bloody Empire* instead of the *Golden Empire*. *The Creation of the Americas* would be changed in *The Brutal Occupation of the Americas*. *World Without End* would be *Worlds that have ended*.

In order to distinguish between error, truth and lies we look at whether the terminology is an adequate expression of the concept. Is the term "discovery" an adequate expression of what really happened since 1492 in the Americas? Or is the term "crime against a humanity" a more appropriate expression? How do you determine what "adequate" means? By looking at the observations, analysis, theory and ethics and open it up for discussion. If there are errors in these elements, the discussion will bring that to the fore. When we are searching for the truth, the errors will be corrected. When we want to produce lies, we prevent the correction of the errors and prevent the discussion about them.

2.4.2.2 *The selection of the observations*

When you search for the truth, you try to take into account all the facts (observations) about the object you are studying. You don't intentionally leave out facts that might contradict the storyline you are building for the concept. Nor do you twist the facts to make it fit into your story. In order to produce lies that is exactly what you have to do: leave out facts that contradict your story and twist facts in order to make it fit into your story.

In the storyline of Eurocentrism Columbus is an unselfish discoverer with a deep sense of dignity and search for the truth. But there is a disturbing event in his voyage that Thomas left out.

The Spanish Crown offered a reward of 10.000 maravedis (golden or silver coins) for the first person that had sighted land on the first voyage of Columbus. It was to be paid as a pension till the person died. This is how the story of the reward is told by Thomas: "On October 10, Columbus announced that he would give a coat of silk to the man who first saw land. The idea was received in silence. What use would such a thing be in the ocean? But that day Columbus and Martín Alonso both noticed birds. The latter wisely said, 'Those birds do not fly like that with no reason.' The same night, Columbus, Pedro Gutiérrez, and the veedor Rodrigo Sánchez thought that they saw light ahead that they believed must be land. The next night, two hours after midnight, with a full moon, Juan Rodríguez Bermejo, also known as Rodrigo de Triana, a sailor from Seville on the *Pinta*, saw 'a white stretch of land' ... and shouted, 'Land! Land!' and he fired a lombard. The next day, October 12, Columbus made landfall."⁹⁰ That is all Thomas had to say about this event.

Columbus kept a diary, that was written by an assistant that referred to him as the Admiral. The first voyage of Columbus was with three ships: the *Niña*, the *Pinta* and the *Santa Maria*.

The diary says on Thursday October 11th 1492: "As the caravel *Pinta* was a better sailer, and went ahead of the Admiral, she found the land, and made the signals ordered by the Admiral. The land was first seen by a sailor named Rodrigo de Triana. But the Admiral, at

ten in the previous night, being on the castle of the poop, saw a light, though it was so uncertain that he could not affirm it was land. He called Pero Gutierrez, a gentleman of the Kings bedchamber, and said that there seemed to be a light, and that he should look at it. He did so, and saw it. The Admiral said the same to Rodrigo Sanchez of Segovia, whom the King and Queen had sent with the fleet as inspector, but he could see nothing, because he was not in a place whence anything could be seen. After the Admiral had spoken he saw the light once or twice, and it was like a wax candle rising and falling. It seemed to few to be an indication of land; but the Admiral made certain that land was close. When they said the *Salve*, which all the sailors were accustomed to sing in their way, the Admiral asked and admonished the men to keep a good look-out on the forecastle, and to watch well for land; and to him who should first cry out that he saw land, he would give a silk doublet, besides the other rewards promised by the Sovereigns, which were 10,000 maravedis to him who should first see it. At two hours after midnight the land was sighted at a distance of two leagues."⁹¹

Columbus had cheated on Rodrigo de Triana. De Triana had first sighted land. Columbus thought that he saw a light, not land; it was confirmed by one person, but the person who should have the final say, the inspector of the Crown, could not confirm it. When he returned to Spain Columbus claimed and got the reward of the Crown. One author explained what happened to De Triana when he returned to Spain: "When Rodrigo later realised the fiction that his commander had perpetrated, he left the Catholic faith 'because Columbus did not give him any credit, nor did the King give him any recompense for his having seen light in the Indies before any other man in the crew.' So troubled was de Triana that, on his return to Spain, he did not reconcile himself with his mother's Judaism but instead embraced Islam. De Oviedo, the expedition's chronicler, claimed that de Triana immediately moved off the Iberian Peninsula to live in North Africa, probably in coastal Morocco. Remarkably, there is some evidence that he sailed with other Muslims to the real Spice Islands (the Moluccas) in 1525, before dying and being buried in the traditional fashion of a certain Muslim tribe of Moors called the Mudarra. He died with another bitter taste in his mouth, as well, for the Catholics had burned his morisco [SH: black/Moorish] father at the stake for trading with Jews."⁹²

In the canon of the tale of Columbus the real story of Rodrigo de Triana is omitted, because it does not resonate with the message of an unselfish discoverer. It portrays a picture of greed, which actually was the driving force behind the Spanish expeditions. Leave these facts out of the narrative, then you get a totally different picture of reality. That is how knowledge is transformed into lies. Facts that contradict the story are left out or are twisted. It is not a matter of error, but of manipulation. The observations that are part of the concept are manipulated in order to create a fantasy that does not match the facts.

2.4.2.4 The analysis

The third aspect of the concept is the analysis: an explanation of the events. In the introduction to his first book Thomas presents his analysis in a nutshell: "This book considers the first two generations of explorers, colonizers, governors, and missionaries who opened the way to Spain's vast American empire, which lasted over three hundred years, more than the British, the French, the Dutch, or the Russian equivalents."⁹³ The book is about "good people" who established an empire of progress.

How different would an analysis in a DTM introduction be, for example like this: "This book considers the first two generations of murderers, thieves, barbarians, oppressors and exploiters of the indigenous people of the Americas, who carried out the first genocide in colonialism and continued their barbarism, for three hundred years."

The analysis is about creating a framing through which to look at and understand the events. A typical example is how the story of a crime, the kidnapping of Tainos, is framed by Thomas: "On October 14, Columbus coasted along *la isleta*, saw other villages, and met other 'Indians' whom 'we understood to be asking if we came from the sky.' Of these, Columbus seized seven, whom he proposed to take home to Castile to be taught Spanish,

*so that later they could become interpreters. Two of them managed to escape the next day. But several other indigenous people were seized in the course of the next weeks. One of them, who was given the name 'Diego Columbus,' remained an interpreter with Columbus for two years. The Admiral thought that he might send the whole population to Castile—as slaves presumably—because he considered that with fifty armed men he would be able to subjugate them all. He reported that they 'were very timid' and 'artless in respect of weapons.' That would surely make them 'good subjects.'"*⁹⁴

A crime – kidnapping – is twisted in such a way that it seems as if the Tainos did not mind to be kidnapped. The twist is achieved by using the word "seize" instead of "kidnap". Then he suggests that the Tainos would voluntarily go with Columbus by using the phrase "*whom he proposed to take home to Castile to be taught Spanish, so that later they could become interpreters*". Columbus made a proposition to the Tainos to go to Spain to become interpreters. He did not force them to go to Spain. In fact, one Taino remained with Columbus as an interpreter for two years. And although Columbus wanted to subjugate them, as slaves presumably, the end result of the subjugation was that they would become "good subjects", which means good civilians, not good servants. This juggling around with parts of facts and complete lies creates the narrative (analysis) of an encounter that has benefitted the Tainos (becoming interpreters) rather than the crime of kidnapping and enslavement. Thomas refrains from telling what the Tainos themselves thought about the kidnapping.

Now here is what Columbus writes in his diary: "*They should be good servants and intelligent, for I observed that they quickly took in what was said to them, and I believe that they would easily be made Christians, as it appeared to me that they had no religion. I, our Lord being pleased, will take hence, at the time of my departure, six natives for your Highnesses, that they may learn to speak.*"⁹⁵ Columbus is frank about his actions. He took them without their consent in order to make them servants, not subjects or civilians. And then he elaborates on their response: resistance.

The Tainos organized to free their brothers who were kidnapped by Columbus. They prepared a canoe to trail the Niña. Columbus: "*A large canoe was alongside the Niña, and one of the men of the island of San Salvador, who was on board, jumped into the sea and got into the canoe. In the middle of the night before, another swam away behind the canoe, which fled, for there never was a boat that could have overtaken her, seeing that in speed they have a great advantage. So they reached the land and left the canoe. Some of my people went on shore in chase of them, but they all fled like fowls.*"⁹⁶

The storyline here is how a crime of kidnapping was committed and how the resistance against the crime was organized and carried out. And this is based on the same sources that Thomas has read: the diaries of Columbus. But he constructed a storyline that fits the concept of discovery and manipulated the facts in order to develop the framing of an encounter that benefitted the Tainos. This is not an error. This is a lie.

2.4.2.5 *The theory*

A fourth element in a concept is the theory behind the concept. A general Eurocentric theory of colonialism is that it constitutes a new era in world history that has promoted science, progress and civilization. The narrative of Thomas is part of this general theory. In the book *Rivers of Gold* the publisher has put quotes from reviews that praise the book. Two quotes position the book in the context of world civilization. Ann Wroe, author of *The Perfect Prince and Pontius Pilate* talks about a clash of civilizations that produced the Spanish Empire: "*No one writes better than Hugh Thomas on the heartbreaking clash of civilizations that produced the Spanish Empire. This book is an event in itself, full to the brim with knowledge, color, and deep understanding.*"⁹⁷

According to *The Boston Globe* "*Thomas puts his erudition to fine use ... analyzing, with care and sensitivity, the thirty elastic years that utterly redefined Western civilization.*"⁹⁸

The theory of the rise of a progressive world civilization is the extension of the concept of "discovery" that is based on an inadequate terminology, misleading selection of facts and

a storyline that produces lies. The DTM theory about colonialism is that was not the apex of word civilization, but the nadir of human civilization for the majority of world population. The world would have been better off without colonialism (see **paragraph x.y**)

2.4.2.6 The ethics

The last element in a concept is ethics. Eurocentric epistemology holds that ethics should not be part of knowledge. Knowledge is not about right or wrong, but about truth and falsehood. In Eurocentrism there is a separation between object and subject of knowledge production. But in practice ethics is used to construct narratives about right or wrong, but then in such a way that the villain becomes the hero and the victim becomes the perpetrator.

Another book by Thomas outside this series deals with the enslavement of Africans: *The Slave Trade. The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870*. Here Thomas claims to be the objective historian and reiterates the position of the separation of object and subject: "I have tried in this book to say what happened. In seeking the truth, I have not thought it necessary to speak of outrage on every page."⁹⁹ But in fact he tries to hide the shame about the European enslavement of Africans. He uses the following technique. He doesn't talk about the crimes of specific enslavers. He talks about the innocence of their descendants. He says: "Historians must not look for villains. I would hate to be reproached for reading *Alice in Wonderland* because the author was a greatgrandson of the slave trader Lutwidge of Whitehaven, or Chateaubriand because the writer's father, at Saint-Malo, was both a slave merchant and, once, a slave captain; or Gibbon because the ease which established him to write his great work without other occupation derived from a fortune accumulated by his grandfather, a director of the South Sea Company, whose chief preoccupation was to carry African slaves in British ships to the Spanish empire. I should not like to have to boycott the plays of Beaumarchais since the author once sought to obtain the same monopoly from the Spanish Crown. Who would refuse to visit Brown University, that fine foundation in Providence, Rhode Island, because it owes so much to John Brown, who was happily trading in slaves in that city in the 1770s? No one, surely, would refuse to take seriously John Locke, even as a philosopher of liberty, because he was a shareholder in the Royal African Company, whose initials RAC, would be branded on so many black breasts in Africa during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. I have a personal reason for hoping that the sins of no collateral ancestors can be visited on the present generation: in the Archivo Indias in Seville... I discovered that a ship bringing twenty slaves to Havana Bay in 1792 was captained by someone from Liverpool by the name of Hugo Tomás."¹⁰⁰

The discussion on guilt of enslavers has shifted to a proclamation of innocence of his descendants. This is a technique of removing ethics from knowledge production.

The ethics of Thomas says that the European trade in human beings should not be judged in ethical terms (right or wrong, heroes or villains). Why? History should be objective and leave ethics out of the discussion.

But then he turns the shame into a reproach of ... Africans, the victims of the European enslavement: "If one is looking for villains in this matter, and some are, one should certainly indeed look at royal families more severely than at Jewish ones: I am partly thinking of the rulers of Benin, the kings of Ashanti, Congo, and Dahomey, and the Vili rulers of Loango, who sold great numbers of slaves over many generations, but also of monarchs in Europe, such as one of my own heroes, Ferdinand the Catholic, King of Aragon. 'Athlete of Christ', as he was named by the Pope, he gave the first licence to carry slaves on a large scale to the New World, since he wished them to extract gold from the mines of Santo Domingo. But then perhaps Ferdinand cannot be blamed specially for agreeing to the transfer of slaves from one part of his dominion to another, for his agents seem to have bought the Africans concerned in Seville, they having been carried there by merchants of Lisbon... Ferdinand would have supposed that, unpleasant

though it might be to be a slave, to be owned by a Christian master was infinitely better than being a subject of an infidel."¹⁰¹

The hypocrisy is appalling and enhanced by what he writes at the end of his trilogy on the Spanish genocidal occupation of the Americas. He refers to the reign of Philip II (1527-1598): *"We have reached the end of reign of Philip II and also an end to the era of spectacular conquest such as had characterized his time as monarch. The heroic age in the history of Spain, and its expansion in the Americas, was at an end. The speed with which the sixteenth-century conquistadores conquered such large territories on two vast continents, and the comparable success of the missionaries with large populations of Indians, stand as on the supreme epics of both valour and imagination by Europeans."*¹⁰²

The ethics of Thomas does not allow him to talk about villains, because he wants to be objective and don't wants to be judgmental. But he does talk about heroes. Objectivity is not always necessary with Thomas. You can be judgmental if you praise the Europeans and denounce the Africans. His hypocritical ethics presents lies as knowledge.

2.5 Human relations and epistemology

2.5.1 Natural and social laws

"Scientific knowledge," says Bhattacharjee *"refers to a generalized body of laws and theories to explain a phenomenon or behaviour of interest that are acquired using the scientific method. Laws are observed patterns of phenomena or behaviours, while theories are systematic explanations of the underlying phenomenon or behaviour."*¹⁰³

The purpose of scientific research is to discover these laws through observation and reasoning (induction, deduction, validation). The premise is that there are natural and social laws. The laws of nature govern the patterns of phenomena and behaviour of nature and the social laws govern the patterns of phenomena and behaviour of human societies.

Both natural and social laws operate independent of human will. In fact some theorists like Karl Marx would argue that in the end the social laws determine human will and consciousness.

The law of supply and demand is such a social law. It operates as an objective law in human societies where markets govern economic production and distribution of goods and services. See paragraph 3.4.2 for a more detailed explanation of the law.

Muhammad Baqir as-Sadr (1935-1980), a Muslim scholar from Iraq who wrote an interesting critique of Western economics, explains the difference between the laws of nature and the laws of economics: *"The law of supply and demand... is not an objective law operating independently of understanding, of man, as do the laws of physics and astronomy."*¹⁰⁴ This so-called law depends *"on the correctness of the values and ideas whereupon it was based."*¹⁰⁵ Baqir As-Sadr uses the word "doctrine" to characterize what we call "ethics": rules about what is right or wrong. He continues: *"This means that the scientific laws in the capitalist economy are scientific laws in the framework of a particular doctrine, and not general laws that might be applicable to every society and at every place and at all times like the natural laws in Physics and Chemistry. Many of those laws are only regarded objective realities in the social conditions controlled by capitalism with its aspects, ideas and meanings and consequently they are not applicable in a society which is not controlled by Capitalism and in which its ideas do not prevail."*¹⁰⁶

The ethics behind the law of supply and demand is called greed. But greed is not a law, but a choice. There are social relations possible with a market and yet with ethics of the promotion of social cohesion and solidarity as the basis for the production of goods and services. Buddhist and Islamic economic theories claim that social relations based on their philosophy makes such economic structures possible.

The law of supply and demand is not only about ethics, but also about power that goes with a certain ethics. If there is a famine the demand for food would be very high while the supply would be very limited. In order to prevent those hungry people without money to just steal the food from the sellers a repression system should be in place that can prevent the hungry masses to eat and force them to starve.

Baqir as-Sadr points out the connection between object and subject of knowledge. The subject, the researcher, operates from ethical assumptions regarding greed. He neutralizes greed by calling it "profit maximization" and thus pushes ethics to the background. Profit maximization sounds more neutral than greed.

A mechanism to cover up the ethics of so called social laws is to apply criteria from natural sciences for judging valid knowledge to social sciences. British philosopher Karl Popper (1902-1994) does that with his falsification criteria. Popper articulated these criteria in six points:

- "1. It is easy to obtain confirmations, or verifications, for nearly every theory - if we look for confirmations.*
- 2. Confirmations should count only if they are the result of risky predictions; that is to say, if, unenlightened by the theory in question, we should have expected an event which was incompatible with the theory - an event which would have refuted the theory.*
- 3. Every 'good' scientific theory is a prohibition: it forbids certain things to happen. The more a theory forbids, the better it is.*
- 4. A theory which is not refutable by any conceivable event is nonscientific. Irrefutability is not a virtue of a theory (as people often think) but a vice.*
- 5. Every genuine test of a theory is an attempt to falsify it, or to refute it. Testability is falsifiability; but there are degrees of testability: some theories are more testable, more exposed to refutation, than others; they take, as it were, greater risks.*
- 6. Confirming evidence should not count except when it is the result of a genuine test of the theory; and this means that it can be presented as a serious but unsuccessful attempt to falsify the theory. (I now speak in such cases of 'corroborating evidence'.)"¹⁰⁷*

There is nothing here about detecting how the ethics of the researcher impacts the outcome of knowledge, how object and subject are connected. And by this trick by equalizing natural and social sciences ethics disappears from knowledge.

In Western science the study of humans is not different from the study of nature: observation and reasoning leads to the discovery of laws of nature and laws of human society. In the study of nature mathematics appeared to adequately capture the essence of the laws of nature. It was natural for Eurocentric scientist to extend this tool to the social sciences. So mathematics entered the social sciences on the premise that the object of their study – humans – behaved according to social laws, much like natural laws. Mathematical sub branches arose in social sciences like econometrics in economics, sociometrics in sociology, psychometrics in psychology and cliometrics in history.

Within Eurocentrism there was opposition to this trend. Austrian economist Carl Menger (1840-1921) criticized the idea that mathematics could capture the essence of economic processes in a debate that became known as the "Methodenstreit" (German for "method dispute"). Social phenomena don't behave in the way like natural phenomena do, argues Menger: It is *"really insane in the light of the present state of the theoretical natural sciences, of wanting to interpret social phenomena not in a specifically sociological way, but in the atomistic way of the natural sciences."*¹⁰⁸

But Menger's argument did not carry the day. The notion of social laws is not questioned in the Eurocentric canon.

2.5.2 The sources of knowledge about the social world

Eurocentric epistemology acknowledges only one source of knowledge production that goes both for the natural and the social world: observation and reasoning. But in the social world there are other sources of knowledge production that have disappeared because of the equalization of the methodology of natural and social sciences.

There are five other sources of knowledge that Eurocentrism misses in its epistemology and therefore it prevent us from getting a full understanding of human relations.

1. Innate knowledge: knowledge with which humans are born.
2. Common sense: cumulative knowledge of a community that has been passed on through generations to members of the community and is regarded as basic truths.
3. Social knowledge: knowledge that comes through social interaction with other humans.
4. Creativity: the gift of humans to create new things.
5. Ethics: a sense of what is right or wrong that has become part of knowledge.

All these sources – like observation and reasoning – have their faults. But that does not mean that they should be discarded as legitimate sources of knowledge.

2.5.2.1 Innate knowledge

Is there knowledge that humans acquire at birth and thus is innate? Yes, would the DTM answer be. Let me illustrate this with an example that lies at the heart of DTM: the concept of freedom and mental slavery.

There are two views:

- The concept of freedom is discovered through thinking (Eurocentrism).
- The concept of freedom is innate; humans are born with this concept (DTM).

Harvard professor Orlando Patterson embraces the first view. He wrote a book to show that the concept of freedom was exclusively discovered in the West: *"One of the major objectives of this work is to show that freedom was a peculiarly Western value and ideal."*¹⁰⁹ He argues that in Africa the Africans did not mind being enslaved: *"In precolonial African societies slavery was widespread and their release from slavery was not uncommon... The antithesis of slavery was never freedom in the Western sense (by which they mean personal freedom). What the ambitious slave sought, and what the self-interested master offered, was the reduction of the slave's marginality and his partial resocialization in the master's community."*¹¹⁰

By the way, his proposition was not based on a representative collection of interviews of enslaved Africans who reflected on slavery, as the Eurocentric canon would prescribe for determining what a social group thinks of something. How could he know what the ambitious slave was thinking? He just made it up.

I will the develop the DTM argument for innate knowledge from an account of Frederick Douglass (1818-1895), an American icon in the struggle against enslavement. Douglass recounts an incident during his enslavement of a physical confrontation with his enslaver, Mr. Covey. Covey wanted to beat Douglas as a form of punishment. Douglass: *"Mr. Covey entered the stable with a long rope; and just as I was half out of the loft, he caught hold of my legs, and was about tying me. As soon as I found what he was up to, I gave a sudden spring, and as I did so, he holding to my legs, I was brought sprawling on the stable floor. Mr. Covey seemed now to think he had me, and could do what he pleased; but at this moment—from whence came the spirit I don't know—I resolved to fight; and, suiting my action to the resolution, I seized Covey hard by the throat."*¹¹¹

In the confrontation Douglass was successful in beating up his enslaver. He concluded: *"This battle with Mr. Covey was the turning-point in my career as a slave. It rekindled*

the few expiring embers of freedom, and revived within me a sense of my own manhood. It recalled the departed self-confidence, and inspired me again with a determination to be free. The gratification afforded by the triumph was a full compensation for whatever else might follow, even death itself. He only can understand the deep satisfaction which I experienced, who has himself repelled by force the bloody arm of enslavement. I felt as I never felt before. It was a glorious resurrection, from the tomb of enslavement, to the heaven of freedom. My long-crushed spirit rose, cowardice departed, bold defiance took its place; and I now resolved that, however long I might remain a slave in form, the day had passed forever when I could be a slave in fact. I did not hesitate to let it be known of me, that the white man who expected to succeed in whipping me, must also succeed in killing me."¹¹²

Douglas does not know "from whence came the spirit" to resist and fight, but he came to realise that he had to fight. After the fight – which he won – he became aware of the concept of mental slavery: what it was and how it works.

What is the knowledge about mental slavery that Douglas became aware of?

1. Mental slavery is about cowardice, a departed self-confidence, a lack of (wo)manhood, a long-crushed spirit.
2. Liberation from mental slavery is about regaining courage, acquiring self-confidence and a sense of (wo)manhood, and lifting your spirit.
3. Liberation from mental slavery comes through the will to struggle and the will to pay the highest price for freedom: *"The gratification afforded by the triumph was a full compensation for whatever else might follow, even death itself... The white man who expected to succeed in whipping me, must also succeed in killing me."*
4. Liberation from slavery starts in the mind. Even if materially you live in a system of enslavement, you mind can be liberated: *"However long I might remain a slave in form, the day had passed forever when I could be a slave in fact."*
5. A person who has never been enslaved, cannot gain real knowledge about enslavement, because it is not only about facts but also about feelings: *"He only can understand the deep satisfaction which I experienced, who has himself repelled by force the bloody arm of enslavement."*

How would the Eurocentric epistemology handle this case?

First, in Eurocentrism knowledge is based only on observation and reasoning. But Douglass did not acquire the knowledge about mental slavery through observation and reasoning. He cannot even point to the source of his knowledge: *"From whence came the spirit I don't know—I resolved to fight; and, suiting my action to the resolution, I seized Covey hard by the throat."*

Eurocentrism would then conclude that the knowledge of Douglass is invalid, because the only valid source is observation and reasoning.

Second, Eurocentrism holds that knowledge production rests on the separation of object and subject. The object of knowledge is the mind of Douglas. The subject of knowledge is also his mind. He concludes after the fight: *"My long-crushed spirit rose, cowardice departed, bold defiance took its place; and I now resolved that, however long I might remain a slave in form, the day had passed forever when I could be a slave in fact."*¹¹³

If there is no separation between object and subject, then the knowledge is invalid according to Eurocentrism. Therefore the knowledge of Douglass does not contribute anything to science.

Third, validation of knowledge is crucial in Eurocentrism. One of the elements of validation is replication of the phenomenon. The fight between Douglass and Covey was a non-replicable event.

Conclusion: if we use the Eurocentric epistemology the whole experience of Douglass that created essential knowledge about mental slavery should be discarded as invalid knowledge. But from a DTM perspective the analysis of mental slavery of Douglass is crucial for understanding the phenomenon. It is not only about the individual experience of Douglass. It is about the experience of the colonized world in general.

Eurocentric epistemology blocks the understanding of mental slavery, which is an important part of modern world history.

In the western canon of science the concept of innate ideas is declared non-valid. The concept of innate ideas has been developed in different philosophical traditions. In Chinese philosophy Wang Yangming (1472-1529), a neo-Confucian during the Ming dynasty, writes: *"Knowledge is native to the mind; the mind naturally is able to know... When [a parent] sees a child fall into a well it naturally knows what commiseration is. This is intuitive knowledge of good, and is not attained through external investigation."*¹¹⁴ Western philosophers like Plato and Descartes adhered to this concept. Jainism, a philosophical school in India, holds that perception of an object merely serves to uncover the innate knowledge that we already have within us about that object. The Fanti philosophy in Africa believes that certain individuals are born with certain knowledge and abilities, that are not acquired from experience, although they can be developed through experience.¹¹⁵ African philosopher Maduabuchi Dukor makes a link between innate ideas and intuition. Intuition plays a big role in African philosophy, sometimes more than perception: *"Perception is defined as the apprehension of the world through the sense, or the general exercise of it, or particular cases of its exercise, and also what is perceived. On the other hand, intuition is a direct apprehension of truth, which is not the direct result of reasoning or sense-perception."*¹¹⁶

Another way of looking at how the innate knowledge becomes available is in the concept of awareness. Douglass explains that he became aware of something that was there all the time: the notion of freedom from mental slavery. Awareness is the realisation that knowledge which was there is relevant in understanding the world.

Some concepts are innate. Humans are born with the concept of freedom or the concept of misery. They don't learn them by observation and reasoning. They come from a different source: that what makes up a human being. Nature does not have that source, so innate ideas are not relevant in natural sciences, but they are in social sciences.

2.5.2.2 Common sense

I will elucidate the concept of common sense with a discussion about a discovery by French philosopher Descartes. *"René Descartes (1596-1650) is usually considered the founder of modern philosophy, and, I think, rightly,"* writes Bertrand Russell: *"He is the first man of high philosophic capacity whose outlook is profoundly affected by the new physics and astronomy."*¹¹⁷

Descartes lived in an era in which theology was paramount in knowledge production. Christian theology maintained that when reason conflicts with faith, faith should be followed and not reason. Descartes holds that reason should prevail and elucidates that with the case of what he calls "hyperbolic doubt" (deliberately over exaggerating doubt). He developed a method of reasoning to get to the truth in four steps. He explains the steps: *"The first was never to accept anything as true that I did not incontrovertibly know to be so... The second was to divide all the difficulties under examination into as many parts as possible, and as many as were required to solve them in the best way. The third was to conduct my thoughts in a given order, beginning with the simplest and most easily understood objects, and gradually ascending, as it were step by step, to the knowledge of the most complex... The last was to undertake such complete enumerations and such general surveys that I would be sure to have left nothing out."*¹¹⁸

You don't need a belief in the authority of theologians to get to the truth. You can rely on this particular method of reasoning. He uses the method to tackle the question of the fallibility of the senses. Our senses can deceive us. We can mistake a snake for a rope.

How do we know that our senses are giving us correct information and that we are not living in a dream all the time? In order to answer that question he uses his methodology.

He starts with doubting everything. Everything that was taken for granted, is now uncertain, even his own existence. He develops the argument: *"I proceeded to eradicate from my mind all the mistakes that might earlier have crept into it. Because our senses sometimes deceive us, I decided to suppose that nothing was such as they lead us to imagine it to be. And because there are men who make mistakes in reasoning, even about the simplest elements of geometry, and commit logical fallacies, I judged that I was as prone to error as anyone else, and I rejected as false all the reasoning I had hitherto accepted as valid proof. Finally, considering that all the same thoughts which we have while awake can come to us while asleep without any one of them then being true, I resolved to pretend that everything that had ever entered my head was no more true than the illusions of my dreams. But immediately afterwards I noted that, while I was trying to think of all things being false in this way, it was necessarily the case that I, who was thinking them, had to be something; and observing this truth: I am thinking therefore I exist."*¹¹⁹ In Latin (the language in which many philosophical books were written at that time) *"I think, therefore I exist"* is translated as *"cogito, ergo sum"*.

An African Christian theologian and bishop from Algeria, Augustine of Hippo (354-430 BCE), used a similar argumentation 1,200 years earlier. Instead of *"cogito ergo sum"*, he used the phrase *"si fallor, sum"* – *"If I make mistakes, I exist"*. Augustine reasoned that by making mistakes he knows about his own existence. Descartes became famous in the history of Western philosophy with *"cogito ergo sum"*. His phrase is regarded as a stroke of genius and a foundational pillar of Western science.

From a DTM perspective it is complete nonsense, because it goes against common sense. Let me develop the argument. Descartes doubts his existence, which means that he is unsure about two things: does he exist or does he not exist. What makes you think that you exist? You can confirm that with your senses. But what does it mean to say that *"I don't exist"*. It is logically complete nonsense. You cannot talk about an *"I"* that does not exist, because logically the *I* means that you are talking about someone who exists. It has nothing to do with the process of thinking. It is logically nonsense to consider the idea that *"I don't exist"*.

Our senses can deceive us and our common sense may lead us astray. But that does not mean that common sense has no value in knowledge production. Decolonial mathematician, C.K. Raju, uses a classic example from Indian philosophy to illustrate the relevance of common sense in this regard: *"I might mistake a snake for a rope, but I don't mistake an elephant for a rope."*¹²⁰

Common sense is the cumulative knowledge of a community that has been passed on through generations to members of the community and is regarded as basic truths. These truths might come under criticism and then dismissed as invalid knowledge. But there will still be enough basic truths to maintain that common sense is a valid source of knowledge. If I were to go on the street and tell somebody: *"I doubt whether I exist"*, (s)he would refuse to think that I am a great philosopher. (S)he would probably call 911 for an ambulance to take me to a mental institution.

Descartes reduced the essence of a human being to thinking and from that he concluded that he exists. But a human being has many characteristics that reminds it of its existence. Common sense tells you that a human being is more than a thinking creature. A human needs food, defecates, feels pain etc. *"I think, therefore I am"* could have similar variants that refer to these essential characteristics like *"I shit, therefore I am"*. Or if someone puts a fire in my face it would be *"I burn, therefore I am"*. It is not a stroke of genius to be able to recognize this as a human trait. It is common sense.

Descartes speaks from the position of a wealthy white European in the seventeenth century who had a good life, drinking wine and having good food in a *"stove-heated room"*, as he described the space in which he lived and worked. Imagine an enslaved African in Haiti running for his life while being chased by enslavers who want to capture

him. The first thought in his mind would not be "*I think, therefore I am*", but "*I run, therefore I am*". If there is anyone who should be wondering whether (s)he lives in a dream, or rather a nightmare, it would be one of the enslaved Africans in the Americas. This type of thinking is only possible when your belly is full and you have the luxury to fantasise and forget common sense.

The fantasy of Descartes about a dream is very narrow minded and that leads him to think that his dream has only one option: it is a thinking human being that is dreaming. His fantasy was confined to seeing himself as a human being. However, there is another possibility with dreams, as the story of Chinese philosopher Zhuang Zhou (369-301 BCE) shows. His "butterfly dream" became very famous and goes as follows: "*Once Zhuang Zhou dreamed he was a butterfly, a butterfly flitting and fluttering around, happy with himself and doing as he pleased. He didn't know he was Zhuang Zhou. Suddenly he woke up, and there he was, solid and unmistakable Zhuang Zhou. But he didn't know if he were Zhuang Zhou who had dreamed he was a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming he was Zhuang Zhou.*"¹²¹ There are different interpretations of the story. My interpretation is that Zhuang Zhou was able to transcend the division between man and nature. With his imagination that not Zhuang Zhou but the butterfly might be dreaming he turned the question of what reality is, upside down. Can you fantasise that you are in a dream of somebody else or something else? Once you let your fantasy loose, this is surely a possibility. The whole system of reasoning to prove that you exists falls apart because now it is unclear who the "I" is in "*I think, therefore I exist*". If you leave common sense behind, there is no limit in the fantasy.

2.5.2.3 Social knowledge

Knowledge is sometimes only possible through interaction with others and cannot be obtained by an individual. That is certainly the case with a dream. Irrespective of the question whether you exist, you can ask yourself: "*Am I dreaming or am I awake?*" How do you know the answer? Suppose that you are the only person in the world. In your dream you go through experiences that look like real life experiences. If there is no one to wake you up or to interact with you, how can you possibly know if you are awake or dreaming? The only way to know if you are dreaming or not, is when there is somebody to wake you up, or you wake up to see that there is somebody that interacts with you. In your dream you can interact with others, but the logic of the dream would never match the logic of real life. Things in real life are more coherent than in a dream. The continuous interaction rather than a single act would tell you whether that interaction belongs to a dream or to real life. There is no way to determine this if you were the only person on the world.

A source of knowledge is social interaction. In the African philosophy of Ubuntu this is acknowledged in the phrase "*People are people through other people*" or to paraphrase Descartes: "*I am, because we are*". The individual exists in relation to other individuals in a community. Knowledge about people is therefore achieved in the understanding of the interaction between the people that constitute a community.

In the example of Frederick Douglass he came to the knowledge of what mental slavery was through the fight with his enslaver. Without this interaction he would not have gained this knowledge.

2.5.2.4 Creativity

Creativity is the ability to produce new ideas without the use of other established methods of knowledge production. It is the ability to imagine something new. There are ways of promoting creativity such as creating the right environment for producing new ideas or identifying people with a creative potential. There is also a specific method of using creativity in scientific knowledge production: the mind experiment.

A famous case is the concept of two falling objects of unequal weight that are released from the same height. Which object will reach the ground first? According to Aristotle

(384-322 BCE) the heavier object would hit the ground first, because the weight influences the speed. Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) thought that they would both hit the ground at the same time. He came up with the idea without observation but through creative thinking: a mind experiment. He argued as follows. Suppose you attach a light and a heavy ball to each other through a string. The heavy ball would fall with the speed of H and the light with the speed of L . The value of H is higher than L . In the Aristotelian logic the light ball will slow up the heavy one (acting as a kind of drag). The speed of the combined system C would be slower than the speed of the heavy ball falling alone ($H > C$). But the combined system is heavier than the heavy ball alone, so it should fall faster ($C > H$). The absurd conclusion is that the heavy ball is both faster and slower than the even heavier combined system. So without any observation Galileo came up with the creative idea that they should hit the ground at the same time. He wrote: "*Without experiment, I am sure that the effect will happen as I tell you, because it must happen that way*".¹²² And indeed, experiments with falling objects confirmed his concept.

The concept is not produced on the basis of observation and reasoning. There is no induction (theory formation on the basis of experimental data) or deduction (theory testing). There is just creativity that produced the concept. Later the prediction of the concept was tested, but the creation of the concept is not based on observation. So creativity is another source of knowledge production.

2.5.2.5 Ethics

A concept has an ethical component. In Eurocentric epistemology ethics stands on its own and is not part of knowledge production. Ethics is about right or wrong, not about truth and falsehood. Yet in the notion of a concept, they are intertwined.

What is the source of ethics? That is the belief system that a community upholds. There are many belief systems. Confucianism in China is not concerned with spirits or God but with the importance of family and social harmony. Its rules and rituals hardly involve references to spirits and is concentrated on paying respect to ancestors. Indigenous belief systems in Africa regard nature and humans as part of one living community that include the living, the deceased (living dead) and the unborn. In Latin America the indigenous people call nature mother earth (Pacha Mama) who is entrusted with intelligence. The different schools of Hinduism stress a way of life more than a belief in deities. The so called monotheistic religions of Islam, Judaism and Christianity have a belief system centred on the belief in one God. Scientific knowledge production took place in advanced civilizations in which these belief systems have flourished without any conflict. Only in the West a conflict arose between science and ethics.

Knowledge about the social life of human beings is imbued with ethics. Suppose you want to understand economics, you cannot fully grasp the nature of production, distribution and financing of goods and services without understanding the ethics that govern their relationship. Understanding the ethics provides you with insight about this relationship as Muhammad Baqir as-Sadr explained earlier.

2.5.3 Knowledge, nature and human beings

Eurocentric science is very limited in its understanding of the relationship between man and nature because they have only one language by which it tries to comprehend nature. In that language nature is divided into dead matter (celestial objects, geological objects of the earth) and living matter (plants, animals, human beings). Among the living matters humans take a special place. They are instilled with intelligence and therefore they are entitled to rule nature, that is both dead matter and non-human living matter (plants, animals).

If this is the only language in which one talks about nature then science becomes the key to rule nature. Natural sciences should make us understand the laws of nature so we can manage and control nature. The question of ethics (respect for nature) has disappeared.

Moreover, the knowledge of nature narrows down to the knowledge about the physical characteristics in nature, as is the case in biology. Biology is the natural science that involves the study of life and living organisms. Biologists have produced a classification of life forms. That classification is presented as objective and without any bias in ethics. And thus a cow is regarded as just another animal in the class of animals: the domesticated cattle with the Latin name *Bos Taurus*.¹²³ The classification is based on the physical characteristics of the cow in relation to other animals.

In Hinduism a cow is regarded as a sacred creature. It is considered a sin to kill a cow or eat its meat, just as it is considered a sin to kill a human being or eat its meat. These elements are part of the concept of a cow. It is part of the knowledge of what a cow is. In the pastoral Hindu society people relied on the cows for milk and dung. Cow dung was one of the main fuels in rural India. It also served as a fertilizer. Cow dung and cow urine were used as an disinfectant to clean the home. Hindus consider milk as among the highest forms of food. Cow's milk is believed to have a calming effect and improves meditation. A product of cow's milk - ghee (clarified butter) - is used in religious rituals. Hindus appreciate the tolerance, patience and calmness of the cow. The cow stands for the goodness of Hindu religion. The cow belongs to the world in which humans and cows are not classified in lower and higher life forms. Their classification is based on ethics about what is right or wrong in the relationship between cows and humans. So what is the ethical basis of the Eurocentric classification? In Eurocentrism a cow is just another lower life form of animals and therefore there is no prohibition on eating a cow. Non-prohibition of killing a cow is also an ethical stand. It tells you that it is not forbidden to eat a cow.

Biology is part of life sciences. What about the knowledge about "non-living" nature: physics, astronomy, chemistry or geology? Where is ethics hidden in the knowledge about non-living nature? It is hidden in concepts on the relationship between humans and nature. In Eurocentrism there is a strict division between living and non-living nature.

In different belief systems outside the West this strict division is absent: nature is regarded as part of the world of the living. There is no separation between nature and humans. The indigenous people of the Andes have produced the concept of *Pacha Mama*, Mother Earth, that expresses this idea. They explain it as follows: *"Pachamama is our mother. What can be given to a mother? Affection, and of course respect, only respect. What is our Kawsay (life)? Our Kawsay is all that we have here in the universe. Our plants, our trees, our water, our birds, animals, the sun, the moon, the stars... Some say: 'Don't listen to that. There is not Mother Earth, the moon and the sun are not alive.' Rivers lives and everything lives. It's just that they cannot speak or sometimes we don't understand them. However, if you listen and understand, you could hear the river as if it were chanting. In the cultivating months, rivers play the flute. At carnivals, rivers play carnival music. At Easter, they play the mandoline and guitar. Sometimes that happens beyond my house. Nowadays no one is paying attention to the rivers and they are getting sad and hungry. Just as we sometimes walk around hungry with no one to offer us anything. They are hungry too, that is why they go out of their way, looking for food. Provoking landslides, crushing and eating people for ignoring them... That is why Mother Earth is always conscious, because She's alive. Mother Earth stays healthy when we carry out our duty towards Her. So we'll also be fine if we carry out our duty. If we revere here, our food will be secure. That is why we must remember Mother Earth at all times, because She has great powers."*¹²⁴

If you read this from a Eurocentric point of view, you might think: *"These people are crazy. They confuse dead matter with living human beings."* But then, it is a Eurocentric perspective to limit the concept of the relationship between matter in nature and human beings in categories of living and non-living nature. The ethics in the concept of *Pacha Mama* revolves around the idea of respect for nature and the balance between nature and human beings. The articulation is in mystical terms, but its practical consequences are impressive for anyone who cares about the environment.

In 2010 The World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth was organized in Bolivia and attended by 30.000 people from over 100 countries. The conference adopted a *Universal Declaration of the Right of Mother Earth*, like the UN adopted a universal declaration of human rights. Article 1 states that Mother Earth is "a living being, a unique, indivisible, self-regulating community of interrelated beings that sustains, contains and reproduces all beings."¹²⁵ It then sets forth rights such as the right to clean air, the right to be free from contamination, pollution and toxic or radioactive waste; the right to not have its genetic structure modified or disrupted in a manner that threatens its integrity or vital and healthy functioning etc.

There are different ways of looking at the relationship between humans and nature. In the concept of Pacha Mama ethics is clearly embedded in the concept. Where is the ethics in the Eurocentric concept of living and non-living nature? It is expressed in the disregard for nature: humans are a higher life form with the right to manipulate nature. This is about ethics, not about facts.

Western science has come up with a concept that resembles Pacha Mama: the concept of eco-systems. "In an ecosystem the organisms and the inorganic factors alike are components which are in relatively stable dynamic equilibrium," writes A. Tansley.¹²⁶ He regards an ecosystem as a community of living organisms that interact with the non-living components of their environment interacting as one holistic system. The non-living components are things like air, water, mineral soil (dead matter). The non-living nature does not possess intelligence, but it operates on a certain logic that we need to understand and respect. From there it is a small step towards respecting the equilibrium between living and non-living matter. And then knowledge about nature becomes imbued with ethics.

2.6 The limitations of Eurocentric logic

An important element in a concept is the storyline and the logic that goes with it. Logic is a set of rules for reasoning, for building the storyline and arguing a proposition. Logic determines the validity of an argument.

In the Eurocentric canon the outcome of knowledge production is a concept with a terminology, observations, analysis, theory and ethics. The analysis provides a consistent explanation of the observations that ends in a verdict of two values: true or false (two-value logic). This verdict comes after the testing of a proposition, or in Popper's terminology, the falsification of a proposition.

The two-value logic goes back to Aristotle's rules for logic, called formal logic. Based on Plato Aristotle also formulate three interconnected laws of logic:

1. The law of identity: A equals A. A thing is always equal to or identical with itself.
Example: Columbus is Columbus.
2. The law of (non)contradiction: A is not non-A. A thing cannot be different from itself.
It is a different way of formulating the first law. Example: Columbus is not a dog.
3. The law of excluded middle: If A equals A, it cannot equal non-A. Everything is and must be either one of two mutually exclusive things. Example: a thing cannot be Columbus and a dog. It is either Columbus or a dog.

The laws are different ways of formulating the same idea of identity.

These are some rules of logic that determine whether a proposition in a concept is true or false. There are thousands of books written on Eurocentric logic from different perspectives and on a multitude of topics. Outside the west people also have developed ideas about logic. But they are not acknowledged in the canon of Westernized knowledge.

The Acholi people from Southern Sudan have embedded in their language another view of the principle of the excluded middle. Victor Ocaya explains: "This principle says that

between a statement and its negation there is no other alternative. The Acholi language, however, has a peculiar way of repeating an adjective in a manner that seems to suggest a third possible alternative between a statement and its negation. For example:

1 Piny lyet: It is hot. (P)

2 Piny pe lyet: It is not hot. (P)

3 Piny lyet-lyet: It is rather hot. (?)

In (3) the English "rather" does not capture the Acholi idea of lyet-lyet, which is somewhere between (1) and (2). Piny lyet-lyet quite unambiguously asserts that it is neither "hot" nor "not hot" and the law of excluded middle rules out just this possibility. This is evidence against the law of excluded middle, from an Acholi standpoint.¹²⁷

In the ancient Indian philosophy of Jainism the two value logic is regarded as inadequate to understand reality. The world is not only black or white. There are many possible perceptions of reality. No single proposition can capture the complexity of reality. Therefore it is mandatory to put a prefix to every proposition that expresses this by using the term "syad", which means "in some ways", "from a perspective", "arguably", "possibly". The Jains have developed a seven-value logic based on the notion of true, false and unassertible (cannot be described, it is impossible to make statements about it). The seven values are:

1. Possible, something is true. Example: Columbus is dead.
2. Possible, something is false. Example: Columbus is not dead.
3. Possible, something is true and false. Example: Columbus is dying: dead and not dead.
4. Possible, something is unassertible. Example: We cannot assert whether Columbus is dead or not dead.
5. Possible, something is true and unassertible. Example: Columbus is dead, but we cannot assert that.
6. Possible, something is false and unassertible. Example: Columbus is not dead, but we cannot assert that.
7. Possible, something is true and false and unassertible. Example: Columbus is dying, but we cannot assert that.¹²⁸

If you are accustomed to think according to two-value logic, this does not make sense. How can somebody be dead and alive? Very simple, by taking change and continuity into account. Once you do that, formal logic does not work.

Look at Columbus breathing, sailing with his ship, kidnapping Tainos, raping Taino women, stealing their gold. You can be certain that he is alive. There are many signs that he is alive.

Look at Columbus when he is dead, lying in his coffin on his way to be buried. His heart stopped beating. So you can be sure that he is dead.

Now look at the short period in which Columbus is dying. He has difficulty breathing and it seems as if he is going to stop with breathing. You can claim that he is alive, but he is on his way to be dead. Then he stops breathing, but his heart still beats for a short period. Not breathing is a sign that he is dead, but if his heart beats, he is alive. Now his heart stops beating, but he still has brain activity, because the reserve oxygen in his lungs can provide his brain with a few last minutes of energy. If a doctor in these minutes performs CPR by pressing on his chest to get his heart beating again, he might get a heartbeat back. So how do we characterize his position in this short period. Formal logic cannot deal with this situation, because he is dead and not dead in this period, depending on what criteria you use to define life or dead. And sometime we cannot assert whether he is dead or alive, because the criteria are not clear-cut and can

contradict each other. You can define breathing as the most important criterion, but brain activity is also a criterion. You can have some breathing, yet still have brain activity.

The problem lies in the fact that there is not one single criterion that can describe the exact situation in the phase of transition. There a complex multitude of criteria: heart beat, breathing, brain activity. They all interact in different ways at different times in the transition phase.

Take a less dramatic example: a painting of Columbus where he is ten year old and one where he is fifty years old. Obviously, a ten year old is not the same person as a fifty year old. Yet, Columbus at ten years is the same person as Columbus at fifty years old. With formal logic you are at loss to answer the question: are the two paintings about the same person?

With Jain logic you can, because continuity and change is in their concept. Yes, it is the same person. In picture one he is at a stage of growth of a ten year old (physically, psychologically, culturally etc). In picture two the same person has evolved, keeps some basic characteristics (his appearance, his genetics, his parents and family, maybe his character) and changed in other aspects. Change is not always the cancellation of something: an entity does not exist any more and has changed in something else. Columbus was once alive and then dead. Change can also be an evolution of something where continuity goes along with change.

The Jain logic is based on the idea that the essence of an entity does not consist of one element, but is made up of multiple elements. It may be that one element changes and other are unchanged. A person who is aging has the same genetics (skin colour, eyes, hair texture etc) but his/her body changes as (s)he grows older. The problem is to find the right elements that constitute the essence of an entity. Clearly in the case of Columbus it is not the way he dressed or the language he spoke. That is something he has in common with many other people. So you end up with a combination of physical, genealogical and social characteristics: skin colour, hair texture, genetics, parents, psychological traits etc.

The Jain proposition that we sometime cannot assert that something is true or false goes against the Eurocentric canon that in the end research tells you what is true or false. As long as you keep researching you will be able to distinguish true from false. But in physics it has been established that uncertainty cannot be avoided. In quantum mechanics the German physicist Werner Heisenberg discovered in 1927, that the more precisely the position of some particle is determined, the less precisely its momentum can be known, and vice versa. Momentum is the product of mass and velocity (kilogram/meters per second). So you either know the position or you know the momentum, but you cannot know both variables at the same time.

The Eurocentric canon about logic is not suitable to understand processes in nature and society that goes through evolution and change.

There is a philosophical school in Eurocentrism, that has dealt with this question: dialectics. It was developed by the German philosopher George Hegel (1770-1831).

Dialectics is a method of reasoning that tries to establish the truth through the confrontation of conflicting opinions. Hegel formulates so called laws of dialectics that provide insights in how continuity and change are related to each other. The Marxist school of philosophy then extended it and applied it to social change.¹²⁹

A few examples:

- The transformation of quantity into quality. An example is the transformation from water into steam by adding quantities of energy. The quality of water as a liquid is changed into the quality of water as a gas by adding quantities of energy. One person who protests against a government with a gun is an individual protester. Millions of people protesting with guns is a revolution. The quality of the protest changes from a single protest into a revolution.

- The change of possibility into inevitability. This is related to the transformation of quantity into quality. What seems only a possibility (revolution with one armed person) becomes inevitable (revolution with a million armed people).
- Evolution through contradictions. The contradiction between here and there (two opposite locations) is solved by motion: you move from A to B. A feudal society has two opposite classes: the serfs and the nobility. The social struggle between these classes leads to the rise of capitalism, that consists also of two opposing classes (proletariat and bourgeoisie). The struggle between the opposite classes is the driving force of social evolution.
- The conflict between form and content. Columbus at the age of ten is the same person at the age of fifty in regards to what makes him that particular individual: his content. The content might be: his origin (parents, family), his physical outlook in general (shape of his face, colour of his skin etc), his character etc. His appearance (form) at the age of ten is different from his appearance at the age of fifty (height, body etc). The conflict between form and content is resolved through growth and aging. The old form makes way for new ones.
- Negation of the negation. A negation is the opposite of a state of being. Take the metamorphosis of a butterfly as an example. The transformation from an egg to a butterfly has four stages. It starts with an egg. To become a larva the egg must be transformed into its opposite: a larva. The larva is the negation of the egg: it is not an egg anymore. It has done away with the egg. It has negated the egg. The butterfly keeps evolving to the third stage: it becomes a pupa, a kind of caterpillar. The final stage is the adult butterfly with wings to fly in the air. The larva is the negation of the egg. The pupa is the negation of the larva. The butterfly is the negation of the pupa. In order to understand evolution, you need to understand that it moves through the negation of the negation and each stage is on a higher level than the previous one.

Hegel's laws of dialectics have become an essential part of Marxist philosophical theory. It is taught as a subject in philosophy, but it is not incorporated in the canon of the epistemology that is used in textbooks like that of Bhattacharjee. Not is it used in regular research in the academia.

Decolonial knowledge production cannot be based on Eurocentric two-value logic because of its serious limitations. We need a logical system that gives us a more accurate representation of reality, which is the reality of change and evolution.

2.7 Production of decolonial knowledge

The essence of knowledge production is the production of concepts and theories that describe and analyse the natural and social reality people live in. Where and how are these concepts produced from a decolonial perspective?

Western knowledge production has claimed a position of exclusiveness. Science has developed in the West. Knowledge production outside the West was inferior. Western science has set up the institutions that educate the person who produces and reproduces knowledge: the academia (universities and other institutes for research and higher learning). These institutes and their key figures are instilled with authority. They have funds, networks and support to keep their work and position going. Their voices are recognized as legitimate carriers of knowledge. In media, culture and policy making their knowledge carries the weight of the ultimate arbiter of truth and falsehood and right or wrong.

A small minority of academics is involved in the creation of new knowledge (new concepts and theories). The majority is engaged in the reproduction of existing concepts and theories and their application to specific cases. In the production of knowledge the

academic follows certain methods of research such as induction and deduction to generate concepts and theories.

In DTM we acknowledge that concepts and theories are not only produced by academics, but by intellectuals. An intellectual is someone who produces and reproduces knowledge about these realities, regardless whether they are academics or not. Intellectuals are also spiritual leaders, activists, artists and leaders in the struggle against colonialism and its legacy. They all produce concepts to understand the reality of colonialism. Spiritual leaders have traditionally been involved in producing knowledge about the natural world (for example mathematics, medicine). Their work is not explicitly based on the methodology of induction and deduction, but on the processing of the collective experience of their communities.

In developing the theoretical framework of DTM we will base our work both on the contributions that decolonial academics have made and on the decolonial concepts that have been produced outside the academia. A big challenge for future DTM research is to identify the concepts and theories that have been produced outside the academia and prove their relevance for the scientific framework of DTM.

The concept of decolonizing the mind was originally produced outside the academia. It addressed the problem of mental slavery. Frederick Douglass had discussed the idea of mental slavery in his book in 1845.

Marcus Garvey (1887-1940) was a Jamaican thinker and activist who migrated to America where he built the largest organization of people of African descent in and outside the USA: the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). In 1938 he gave a speech in Sydney in the Canadian province of Nova Scotia, in which he explained the concept of mental slavery: *"We came here not by our will — we were pulled here. We had a terrible time in those early days. We did our bit under difficult circumstances here to build up the glory of the race that enslaved us at the time. We contributed a lot to that civilization. If for nothing else that race owes us a lot... The Negro went to sleep for a long while, resting from his labours, but he slept too long, so everybody stole a march on him and therefore he is the only man without a country; and so the U.N.I.A. seeks to restore the Negro to his own vine and fig tree... I would like to see Canada for the Canadians, England for the English, America for the Americans and in the same way I want to see Africa for the African. We are going to emancipate ourselves from mental slavery because whilst others might free the body, none but ourselves can free the mind... Mind is your only ruler, sovereign. The man who is not able to develop and use his mind is bound to be the slave of the other man who uses his mind, because man is related to man under all circumstances for good or for ill. If man is not able to protect himself from the other man he should use his mind to good advantage. It is your mind that rules the body. You cannot go further than that mind to seek truth and to know truth and to re-act to truth. That is the only way you will be able to protect your group."*¹³⁰

Garvey situated mental slavery into the actual system of the European enslavement of Africans. He refers to the days of slavery when the black race was forced to work for free for the white race and lost everything. In order to restore the Africans they need to emancipate from mental slavery.

Jamaican reggae icon Bob Marley (1945-1981) gave an artistic expression of the concept in *Redemption Song* whose music and lyrics speaks to the hearts and minds of many colonized people: *"Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery. None but ourselves can free our minds."*

It is not just the lyrics that touches your heart. It is also the music, the first tones, his voice, his guitar and all the emotions they arouse in you. It tells you something that you can only know if your mind is ready to accept it: there is mental slavery and none than ourselves can free our minds. It tells the story of the European enslavement of Africans,

the forced shipment of human beings to the Americas as cargo. Their cry for freedom is embodied in struggle. A struggle that starts with the mind and the use of art as a way to liberate the mind.

The concept of mental slavery that is introduced in *Redemption Song* is the result of collective thinking. It is not the product of academic research. Marley was a Rastafarian in Jamaica. The philosophy of the Rastafarians drew upon Marcus Garvey who they regard as their prophet. The UNIA and the Rastafarians were concerned with raising the consciousness in their communities about the effect of European enslavement on the minds of black people. They used art and education in building the pride and self-confidence as instruments in fighting mental slavery.

Mental slavery is another term for the colonization of the mind. Colonization was not limited to the Americas.

In India the British exercised direct control. Three decades after *The Boxer Rebellion*, at the annual session of the Indian National Congress in 1928 in Calcutta, Subhas Chandra Bose (1897-1945) called attention to the "slave mentality" that was at the root of India's political degradation. While Mahatma Gandhi at that time argued for a dominion status with Britain, Bose wanted complete independence that would help foster a "new mentality" to overcome the slave mentality.

In his analysis of the Indian liberation struggle he probed deeper into this topic. He asks the question: *"In considering the political conquest of India by such a small country as England the first point that strikes one is as to how such a feat could be at all possible."*¹³¹

He points out that the Indian people never had any negative feeling against the foreigner. India had been invaded by new tribes and peoples over and over again, but though they came as foreigners, they soon settled down and made India their home. The foreigners would become members of the great Indian family.

Initially the Indians welcomed the foreigners as they did in the past. Only when British rule was established over a large portion of the country, they came to realise that the new invaders were different from the old. *"They had come not merely to make money or to preach religion, but to conquer and to rule – and unlike the invaders of old they were not going to make India their home but were going to rule as foreigners."*¹³²

Bose points to a deliberate policy of the British to control the mind by fostering the "slave mentality". They tried to 'anglicise' every sphere of the life of the Indian people in order to rule over a vast population: *"The missionaries became very active in propagating their religion, and educational institutions on the British model were founded by them, as well as by the state, in different parts of Bengal. The entire educational system was built up on the British model and English was made the medium of instruction, not only in the University but also in the secondary schools. In art and architecture also, British models were imposed on the country. In fact, in inaugurating the new educational system, the Government deliberately stated that their object was to train up a nation who would be English in everything, except in race. In the new schools, students began to think, to talk, to dress and to eat as Englishmen would. The new generation turned out by these schools was quite different from the old. They were no longer Indians in their equipment but English."*¹³³

And thus the British instilled a sense of inferiority in the minds of the Indians.

These are only a few examples that show how the concept of mental slavery and decolonizing the mind was developed outside the academia.

If we are looking for decolonial concepts, we should not limit our search to the academia, but go into activism, spirituality and arts.

2.8 Conclusion

The production of lies is a mechanism of the colonization of the mind. In Eurocentric epistemology there is no acknowledgement of lies. So there is no research methodology in studying lies. In DTM I have laid down such a methodology by looking into the five dimensions of a concept. This produces knowledge of a different type. It looks at how knowledge is manipulated. The production of lies opens up a world in which one can create fantasies that are totally disconnected from reality and is presented as scientific (valid) knowledge.

Epistemology, the theory of knowledge, lies at the heart of the (de)colonization of the mind. Eurocentric epistemology has been canonized in textbooks that are used by Westernized universities across the world. The canon is based on a specific source of knowledge (observation and reasoning), a specific methodology (induction, deduction, validation) and an ethical position on the separation between object and subject of knowledge.

The DTM epistemology is based on the recognition of multiple sources of knowledge apart from observation and reasoning: innate knowledge, common sense, social knowledge, creativity and ethics. The basic unit in DTM epistemology is the notion of a concept. It consists of five elements: terminology, observation (facts), analysis, theory and ethics. DTM epistemology is not only about searching for the truth, but also about exposing lies. In Eurocentrism the lie is not part of the epistemology.

Does the DTM epistemology imply that there are multiple "truths" and that anything goes? No. There are multiple perspectives that produce different concepts of the object of knowledge. Their validity is not fixed and is not only related to truth and falsehood, but also to ethics. There are multiple concepts possible to characterize an object of knowledge depending on the position of the subject. The freedom of critique and discussion is the instrument to determine the validity of these concepts. That validity is not guaranteed by the rules of epistemology.

A major task in producing decolonial knowledge is to engage in the critique of Eurocentric concepts in all of its five dimensions. But decolonial knowledge is not only about critique. It also produces alternative concepts which differ from Eurocentric concepts in its terminology, observation analysis (storyline and logic), theory and ethics. In the confrontation between decolonial and Eurocentric concepts there is common ground for engaging in discussion about terminology, observation, analysis and theory. This is all part of epistemology. But what happens if you deny the role of ethics in epistemology?

First, you deny the relevance of belief systems in knowledge production and claim a position of neutrality. In so far belief systems produce empirical knowledge, one can test this knowledge to assert its relevance. But if it produces ethical guidelines, then either one accepts it as valid guidelines and incorporate it in ones knowledge or one rejects in principle. Eventually that will result in a knowledge system that becomes unethical under the banner of neutrality. Knowledge is now not about seeking the truth, but about proving the falsehood of a belief system. But ethics is not about truth or falsehood, but about right or wrong.

Second, you need to claim that your knowledge is universal. Knowledge ceased to be diverse with different perspectives that are valid. It becomes monolithic: there is one perspective possible because the separation of object and subject makes knowledge objective and independent of the position of the subject. And as we are living in a global system, the monolithic knowledge then becomes universal. The knowledge produced in Europe is valid in China.

Third, the claim of universalism goes with a division of valid and invalid knowledge. That is easily transformed in superior and inferior knowledge. Superior knowledge follows the epistemological rules of Eurocentric canon. Inferior knowledge is knowledge that is

produced outside of this canon. With superiority comes arrogance. And arrogance is not about knowledge, but about ethics.

Fourth, Eurocentric epistemology shows that you can create a world of fantasies. Take the concept of human rights. In the West ideas of liberty and human rights are presented as typical Western ideas with a universal meaning, particularly in Liberalism (see paragraph 1.2). These ideas were in stark contrast to the practice of colonialism.

One discipline of science where you would not expect this world of fantasies to exist, is mathematics. It shows how a Eurocentric epistemology is applied outside the social sciences.

3. Decolonizing mathematics

3.1 Introduction

If there is one discipline that you would not expect to be decolonized, it surely would be mathematics. How do you decolonize $1+1=2$? Do you need expert knowledge of mathematics to understand why and how it will be decolonized?

To start with the last question. This chapter does not require expert knowledge of mathematics and can be understood by anyone with a basic knowledge of mathematics on the level of secondary education.

This chapter explains what decolonizing mathematics means and how it can be done.

Decolonial mathematics differs from what is termed "ethnomathematics" or "multicultural mathematics". Ethno-mathematics is defined as "*the study of the mathematical ideas of traditional peoples.*" "Traditional peoples" are defined as people without a system of writing.¹³⁴ It aims to create understanding and appreciation of ideas produced by "traditional peoples".

Multicultural mathematics is broader than ethno-mathematics. "*Multicultural Mathematics aims to strengthen and expand students' understanding of fundamental mathematics ... through study of the mathematics of world cultures.*"¹³⁵ Like ethno-mathematics it aims to create understanding and appreciation of the mathematical achievements of peoples and cultures outside the West, but it is not limited to non-literate cultures. It takes into account the contribution of technologically advanced civilizations around the world before the rise of colonialism. It also seeks to appeal to the cultural background of students in multicultural classrooms in the West. It aims to "*allow students to develop their mathematics abilities in ways that are cognizant of [their] backgrounds.*"¹³⁶ For example, Chinese students in an American or Canadian classroom should feel proud about the contributions that the Chinese civilization have made to a prestigious branch of knowledge production: mathematics. That will strengthen their self-confidence and contribute to a more inclusive learning environment.

Decolonial mathematics is a totally different ball game. The main objective of decolonial mathematics is not to create understanding and appreciation of the contribution of non-Western civilizations to mathematics. It is a frontal attack on the foundations of Western mathematics. The critique of the fundamentals of Western mathematics is the key to decolonial mathematics.

C.K. Raju, a leading mathematician in the field of decolonizing mathematics asks the rhetorical question: "*Math and science are believed to be universal, so is there anything to decolonise in math and science education?*" He answers: "*Indeed there is. The wrong belief that math and science are universal but developed mainly in the West played a key role in colonisation.*"¹³⁷

This chapter builds on some of his work. I am indebted to Raju for sharing his insights with me. However, I am responsible for the flaws in the ideas expressed in this chapter.

Decolonizing mathematics deals with the following issues:

1. A critique of the Western historiography of mathematics.
2. A critique of the foundations of Western mathematics.
3. A critique of the use of Western mathematics.
4. The concept of reverse engineering in mathematics.
5. A new educational system for mathematics.

3.2 A critique of the Western historiography of mathematics

A DTM critique of the Western historiography of mathematics has two facets.

1. The presentation of Western mathematics as a superior form of mathematics compared to non-Western mathematics which is regarded as inferior.
2. The presentation of Greek mathematics as part of the cradle of Western civilization.

Morris Kline, a Eurocentric historian of mathematics, claims that *"mathematics has been a major cultural force in Western civilization... that ... carries the main burden of scientific reasoning and is the core of the major theories of physical science. It ... has determined the direction and content of much philosophic thought, has destroyed and rebuilt religious doctrines, has supplied substance to economic and political theories, has fashioned major painting, musical, architectural, and literary styles, has fathered our logic, and has furnished the best answers we have to fundamental questions about the nature of man and his universe. As the embodiment and most powerful advocate of the rational spirit, mathematics has invaded domains ruled by authority, custom, and habit, and supplanted them as the arbiter of thought and action. Finally, as an incomparably fine human achievement mathematics offers satisfactions and aesthetic values at least equal to those offered by any other branch of our culture."*¹³⁸

Kline's vision accurately sums up how the history of mathematics is canonized in Western culture. Mathematics is objective science, the ultimate expression of the rational spirit, and embodiment of the best of Western culture. Therefore it is universal.

He locates this superior achievement in Europe, and more specifically in Greece: *"The Greeks, who first appreciated the power of mathematical reasoning, graciously allowing the gods to use it in designing the universe, and then urging man to uncover the pattern of this design, not only gave mathematics a major place in their civilization but initiated patterns of thought that are basic in our own."*¹³⁹

In a more explicit way Thomas Crump compares non-Western with Western mathematics and concludes that *"European mathematics is mathematics; all other mathematics is anthropology. That explains why this other mathematics belongs to what has been called ethnoscience"*.¹⁴⁰ In other words, European mathematics is superior to non-Western mathematics. By characterizing non-Western mathematics as anthropology Crump asserts that non-Europeans have not made any significant contribution to mathematics. Their work maybe of relevance for anthropologists who study non-Western cultures. Mathematicians have nothing to gain from these studies.

How is the argument for the superiority of Western mathematics constructed through historiography?

It puts the focus of the start of the history of mathematics on the Greeks. The Greeks invented mathematics, so the story is being told from that perspective. Many textbooks devote a major part of the initial history of mathematics to the Greek. Then history stops and skips thousands of years to be renovated and continued with the European Renaissance (14th till 17th century) and Enlightenment (17th century and onwards).

Although newer textbooks dedicate chapters to mathematics from non-Western civilizations, the argument still is that Greek mathematics was superior to the rest: *"Many ancient cultures developed various kinds of mathematics, but the Greek mathematicians were unique in putting logical reasoning and proof at the centre of the subject. By doing so, they changed forever what it means to do mathematics,"* says Berlinghof and Govêia.¹⁴¹

The superiority of Greek mathematics lies in its method: logical reasoning and proof. And that is how the historiography of mathematics is described in many current textbooks. Raju articulates his critique of this proposition as follows: *"Western historians have readily conceded that Babylonians, Egyptians, Chinese and Indians all knew earlier that the Pythagorean theorem was true. They have maintained, however, that none of them*

had a proof; hence, none of them knew why it was true; they knew of the theorem as an empirical fact which they did not comprehend, much as an ass might know the theorem without comprehending it. Comprehension, therefore, still dawned with the Greeks."¹⁴²

As I have explained in paragraph 2.2, the idea that knowledge production through logical reasoning and proof is a typical Western invention is a racist idea. It presupposes that non-white people have a different mindset that is not capable of thinking logically and is not sophisticated. The opposite of rational thinking is backwardness. So if you are not thinking rationally, then obviously you are backward.

A historiography of mathematics that contrasts European logical thinking with non-European illogical thinking is rooted in racist ideologies about the superiority of the West. The contrast devaluates the contribution of non-Western mathematicians as part of mathematical knowledge.

The whole idea of non-Western mathematics as intuitive and irrational science that is based on stumbling with empirical data goes against common sense. Why? Because mathematics is not just about calculations. It is about engineering. How is it possible to conduct elaborate and complex engineering without understanding the analysis and concepts behind its mathematics? The Great Pyramid at Giza, erected about 2600 B.C. by Khufu, was called Cheops by the Greek. According to the Greek historian Herodotus (484-425 BCE), who visited the pyramid and talked to the priests - the scientists of those times who knew about the architecture and its history -, it took 30 years and 400,000 workmen to build the pyramid.

For ten years a road was constructed to a limestone quarry some miles distant from Giza. A number of 2,300,000 blocks of stone averaging 2.5 tons and measuring 3 feet in each direction were transported over this road. These blocks were fitted together so perfectly that a knife blade could not be inserted in the joints. The pyramid was 481.2 feet (146.7 meters) high. The base occupied 13 acres (52,609 m²), which is the combined areas of the cathedrals of Florence and Milan, St. Peter's in Rome, and St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey in London. The base was almost a perfect square. By using one of the celestial bodies, the Giza builders were able to orient the sides of the pyramid almost exactly with the four cardinal points of the compass, the error being only fractions of 1°. ¹⁴³

How is this type of engineering possible if you don't understand what you are doing? This was not a job of one engineer working in a short period. It involved not only 400,000 laborers but possible thousands of engineers who had to be trained over a long period of time both for the construction and the organization of the construction. How was this training done if the teachers didn't understand what they were doing?

Common sense tells us that they must have known what they are doing, that they must have had analytical skills and theoretical concepts that enabled them to make the plans and then perform the necessary calculations before any construction was done. The construction was not a matter of trial and error. It must have been based on an architectural plan that must have involved complex mathematics.

The Greeks have developed a mathematical method based on logical reasoning and proof that became the basis of Western mathematics. Why is it impossible that non-Greek mathematicians also used logical reasoning and proof? The fact that there are no written records to testify about it, does not mean that they did not use these methods. It's like saying that if something is not reported in a newspaper, it did not happen.

Why is it impossible for other mathematicians to develop a system of mathematics based on other principles and that still produce valid scientific knowledge? Surely Western mathematics should know this, because until 1830 geometry was based on classical Greek mathematics that stated that two parallel lines would never intersect. That is true in a flat two dimensional world. But the world is not flat. In 1830 two mathematicians, János Bolyai and Nikolai Lobachevsky, independently from each other, published articles that proved that in a three dimensional globe two parallel lines can indeed intersect.

They established a valid branch of geometry called non-Euclidean geometry, based on totally different principles than Euclidean geometry. Why is it impossible for civilizations outside the west to have developed mathematics on totally different, yet still valid, foundations?

The claim for superiority of Western mathematics is also expressed in the naming of mathematical achievements in the historiography of mathematics. If the so called *Pythagorean theorem* was not first invented by Pythagoras but by the Africans in Egypt, why don't we call it the African theorem of the right-angle triangle? Why should we award the first prize for a marathon to the person who came in second or third? The naming of the theorem attributes to the Greeks the first invention of something that was invented elsewhere at a much earlier date. And thus it eliminates the contributions of non-Western civilizations and creates the idea of an exclusive Greek contribution to science.

Another example of curious naming is the so called Rhind Papyrus. The papyrus is written by a scribe named Ahmes in ancient Egypt around 1650 BCE. It is an important and precious source of Egyptian mathematics. A scribe is a person who did the writing on the papyrus roles. Alexander Henry Rhind was a Scottish antiquarian, who purchased the papyrus in 1858 in Luxor, Egypt. It was stolen during illegal excavations near the memorial temple of Pharaoh Ramesses II and bought by Rhind. Common sense tells you that a document should be named after the author and not after the second or third buyer. In the Eurocentric historiography the papers are named the Rhind Papers, after the European who bought the stolen papers rather than after the author, Ahmes. The reason is to sustain the claim of extraordinary achievement, the so called discovery of the Egyptian mathematical papyrus.

A major DTM critique of the Western historiography of mathematics is the lack of acknowledgement that the Greek mathematicians are indebted to Africans for their knowledge. It goes against the racist idea of the inferiority of Africa. There is some mention that Greeks are to a certain degree indebted to Egyptians without specifying the nature of that debt. Further more, often ancient Egypt is not seen as part of Africa but situated in the "Near East".

The ancient Greeks themselves were very specific about their relationship with the Egyptians. They saw them as their teachers. The Egyptian civilization was a highly developed civilization that was admired and respected by the Greeks. Their educational institutes were the Egyptian temples. Their scientists were the priests of these temples. The temples had libraries where students could access the knowledge of that time. So it is not surprising that Greek students were anxious to study in Egypt at these institutes.

Historians from the antiquity documented the relationship between Greek students and their African teachers. One of the most extensive descriptions of the role of Egyptians in the transfer of knowledge to Greece comes from Herodotos who is widely referred to as "the father of history" because of his scientific approach in documenting history. He visited Egypt and talked to the Egyptian scientists: *"Thus far I have spoken of Egypt from my own observation, relating what I myself saw, the ideas that I formed, and the results of my own researches. What follows rests on the accounts given me by the Egyptians, which I shall now repeat, adding thereto some particulars which fell under my own notice."*¹⁴⁴

His book on history routinely compares Greece with Egypt. In a section where he describes how Greek organizers went to Egypt to seek advice on how to improve the Olympic Games he concludes that *"Egyptians ... surpassed all other nations in wisdom."*¹⁴⁵

He elucidates how in different disciplines of science the Egyptians laid the foundation of scientific knowledge and the Greek learned the basics from them.

On astronomy: *"The Egyptians were the first to discover the solar year, and to portion out its course into twelve parts. They obtained this knowledge from the stars. (To my mind they contrive their year much more cleverly than the Greeks, for these last every*

other year intercalate a whole month, but the Egyptians, dividing the year into twelve months of thirty days each, add every year a space of five days besides, whereby the circuit of the seasons is made to return with uniformity)."¹⁴⁶

On geometry: *"Geometry first came to be known in Egypt, whence it passed into Greece. The sun-dial, however, and the gnomon with the division of the day into twelve parts, were received by the Greeks from the Babylonians."*¹⁴⁷

Herodotos explained how mathematics was developed to tackle practical problems in the affairs of the state, notable the distribution and administration of land. He concludes: *"From this practice ... geometry first came to be known in Egypt, whence it passed into Greece."*¹⁴⁸

Herodotos discusses the practice of plagiarism by some Greek writers who put philosophical opinions forward as their own, although the Egyptians were the first to articulate them. He specifically refers to the discussion about the idea of the separation of body and mind that was articulated by Egyptian philosophers: *"There are Greek writers, some of an earlier, some of a later date, who have borrowed this doctrine from the Egyptians, and put it forward as their own. I could mention their names, but I abstain from doing so."*¹⁴⁹

I have limited my summary to mathematics, but in his book Herodotos elaborates on how the Greek were taught by the Egyptians in every major field of science and religion.

Other historians from antiquity recorded similar forms of the transfer of knowledge from Egypt to Greece. Iamblichus (245 – 325 CE), a Neoplatonic philosopher from modern Syria, wrote a biography of the most well known Greek mathematician, Pythagoras (572-500 BCE). He mentions the advice another famous mathematician Thales of Miletus (624-546 BCE) gave to Pythagoras: *"Thales ... gladly announced to him ... that he would become the wisest and most divine of- all men, if he associated with these Egyptian priests."*¹⁵⁰ Thales went to Egypt to learn geometry.

Iamblichus says about Pythagoras that *"while he frequented all the Egyptian temples with the greatest diligence and with accurate investigation, he was both admired and loved by the priests and prophets with whom he associated. And having learnt with the greatest solicitude every particular, he did not neglect to hear of any transaction that was celebrated in his own time, or of any man famous for his wisdom, or any mystery in whatever manner it might be performed; nor did he omit to visit any place in which he thought something more excellent might be found. On this account he went to all the by whom he was furnished with the wisdom which each possessed. He spent therefore two and twenty years in Egypt, in the adyta of temples, astronomizing and geometrizing, and was initiated, not in a superficial or casual manner, in all the mysteries of the Gods."*¹⁵¹

Pythagoras brought the knowledge of the Africans to the Greek: *"On his return to Samos, ... being known by some of the more aged inhabitants, he was not less admired than before. For he appeared to them to be more beautiful and wise, and to possess a divine gracefulness in a more eminent degree. Hence, he was publicly called upon by his country to benefit all men, by imparting to them what he knew. Nor was he averse to this request, but endeavoured to introduce the symbolical code of teaching, in a way perfectly similar to the documents by which he had been instructed in Egypt."*¹⁵²

Diogenes Laertius (third century CE) in his study of the life of Greek philosophers notes that Democritus (460-370 BCE) – who developed the theory of atoms – *"travelled into Egypt to learn geometry from the priests."*¹⁵³

He writes that Euxodos (408-355 BCE), a mathematician, astronomer and student of Plato, *"proceeded to Egypt with Chrysippus the physician, bearing with him letters of introduction from Agesilaus to Nectanabis, who recommended him to the priests. There he remained one year and four months."*¹⁵⁴

The most well-known Greek philosophers, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, also admit that the Africans played an important role in laying the foundations for Greek knowledge.

Socrates says in one of Plato's dialogues: "At the Egyptian city of Naucratis, there was a famous old god, whose name was Theuth; and he was the inventor of many arts, such as arithmetic and calculation and geometry and astronomy and draughts and dice, but his great discovery was the use of letters."¹⁵⁵

Plato writes with admiration about the Egyptian art education and presents it as a model for Greece: "Long ago they appear to have recognized the very principle of which we are now speaking - that their young citizens must be habituated to forms and strains of virtue. These they fixed, and exhibited the patterns of them in their temples; and no painter or artist is allowed to innovate upon them, or to leave the traditional forms and invent new ones. To this day, no alteration is allowed either in these arts, or in music at all. And you will find that their works of art are painted or moulded in the same forms which they had ten thousand years ago; this is literally true and no exaggeration."¹⁵⁶

According to Aristotle "the mathematical arts were founded in Egypt, for there the priestly caste was allowed to be at leisure".¹⁵⁷ He credits Egypt for laying the foundation of astronomy (theory and the collection of data). On the collection of astronomical data he says: "Similar accounts of other stars are given by the Egyptians and Babylonians, whose observations have been kept for very many years past, and from whom much of our evidence about particular stars is derived."¹⁵⁸ On the theory of comets as tails of planets he says: "For this we must not only accept the authority of the Egyptians who assert it, but we have ourselves observed the fact. Besides, the Egyptians affirm that conjunctions of the planets with one another, and with the fixed stars, take place, and we have ourselves observed Jupiter coinciding with one of the stars in the Twins and hiding it, and yet no comet was formed."¹⁵⁹

Because of its racist bias Eurocentric historiography has much difficulty in acknowledging what the Greeks themselves state explicitly: Greek mathematics originated in Africa!

Decolonizing mathematics is a fundamental critique of the racist propositions that are embedded in Eurocentric historiography. It calls for a new historiography that not only acknowledges and appreciates non-Western mathematics, but lays bare the racist notions that are contained in Eurocentric history of mathematics.

It shows that math is not universal but came into existence with contributions from different civilizations and that this should be known, appreciated and studied. It links math to its practical applications from engineering to economics, administration, art and culture.

3.3 A critique of the foundations of Western mathematics

3.3.1 Mathematics, empirical proof, invalid knowledge and fantasies

C.K. Raju explains the difference between the foundation of Western and non-Western mathematics: "Empirical proof is rejected by Western mathematics on the grounds that empirical proof is fallible. Our senses might mislead us. To use a classical example from Indian philosophy: I might mistake a rope for a snake or a snake for a rope."¹⁶⁰

We should not exaggerate the fallibility of our senses. We still have common sense. Raju: "We can mistake a snake for a rope, but we don't mistake a snake for an elephant." The fallibility of our senses is no excuse for detaching mathematics from its empirical basis. Common sense helps us to connect mathematics with empirical proof.

If Western mathematics is not based on empirical proof, what then is the basis of its operation? A Western textbook by J. Shoenfield on mathematical logic explains: "Logic is the study of reasoning; and mathematical logic is the study of the type of reasoning done by mathematicians... The conspicuous feature of mathematics, as opposed to other sciences, is the use of proofs instead of observations. A physicist may prove physical laws from other physical laws; but he usually regards agreement with observation as the ultimate test of a physical law. A mathematician may, on occasion, use observation. However, he will accept this as a law of mathematics only when it has been proved."¹⁶¹

What is meant here by mathematical proof that is apparently different from empirical proof? The law of gravity is discovered by studying moving objects in relation to gravity. The knowledge obtained about the physical law is derived from the analysis of empirical observation. If the analysis is confirmed by empirical observation that this is considered to be a proof of the law. All laws of physics have an empirical basis. Where is the proof of mathematical laws based on?

Shoenfield: "We have certain laws, called axioms, which we accept without proof; the remaining laws, called theorems, are proved from the axioms."¹⁶² So you start with establishing laws without requiring a single empirical proof. You don't need to have an empirical proof to accept the law as being true.

Shoenfield: "For what reasons do we accept the axioms? We might try to use observation here; but this is not very practical and is hardly in the spirit of mathematics. We therefore attempt to select as axioms certain laws which we feel are evident from the nature of the concepts involved."¹⁶³ Now it becomes almost religious. The axioms are selected because one feels that they are evident from the nature of the concepts involved. Mathematics uses concepts. Like axioms there are basic concepts. Shoenfield: "We have certain concepts, called basic concepts, which are left undefined; the remaining concepts, called derived concepts, are defined in terms of these. We have a criterion for basic concepts similar to that of axioms: they should be so simple and clear that we can understand them without a precise definition."¹⁶⁴

Shoenfield now explains how the mathematic system is erected: "We may now describe what a mathematician does as follows. He presents us with certain basic concepts and certain axioms about these concepts. He then explains these concepts to us until we understand them sufficiently well to see that the axioms are true. He then proceeds to define derived concepts and to prove theorems about both basic and derived concepts. The entire edifice which he constructs, consisting of basic concepts, derived concepts, axioms, and theorems is called an axiom system."¹⁶⁵

The Western mathematicians keeps explaining the axioms and basic concepts until you accept them as basic truths without questioning their validity. That is normal in a dictatorship or during the Spanish Inquisition. There brute force was needed to get you accepting the truth without questioning. Here it is the authority of Western mathematicians that forces you to accept the axioms and basic concepts with discussion.

What happens when these basic concepts and axioms turn out not to be valid? What if they don't match empirical proof? Common sense would tell you: it shows the stupidity of the system. The Western answer is the opposite: it shows you the unbelievable genius of Western mathematics.

I will explain the differences in reasoning with a few examples.

3.3.1.1 Proof that $1+1=2$

How do you proof that $1+1=2$? Non-Western mathematics has a simple answer. A number is regarded as a way to represent quantity. If we look around us we observe quantities of objects: apples, money, houses, trees, etc. Numbers are a mathematical way of representing this quantity. Our brain has figured out a way to connect these quantities by performing arithmetic. One apple and one apple makes two apples. In different cultures mathematicians have developed methods to work with numbers: addition, subtraction, division, multiplication, root extraction etc. They are all based on empirical proof.

If you reject empirical proof, how do you proof that $1+1=2$? There have been two attempts in Western mathematics to develop a non-empirical proof: one by Italian mathematician Giuseppe Peano (1858-1932) and one by two British mathematicians Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) and Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1942). Russell and Whitehead published a three-volume book, *Principia Mathematica*, that took 360 pages to prove that $1+1=2$!

The trajectory of their proof is as follows. They define axioms.

First they define a set of items, which they call numbers. They could have called it dogs or frogs.

Then they define the elements of this set. The elements are 1, 2, 3 etc. They could have named the elements "Lassie, Tiger, Tarzan".

Next they place the elements in a certain order: 2 comes after 1 and 3 comes after 2. So the order is 1, 2, 3. Image the numbers on a line: 1 2 3.

Finally they define addition as a shift to the right of one place on the number line. So if you are at number 1, addition is defined as the next number on the line if you shift one place to the right (subtraction is moving one place to the left). Now solely by definition you have proven that $1+1=2$.

Why is this axiomatic approach an invalid form of knowledge? For three reasons.

First, in a similar way we can proof that $1+1=3$. There is no empirical, mathematical or religious reason for defining numbers and the operation of addition in the particular way that Western mathematicians have done. Once you disconnect mathematics from empirical proof, there is nothing that prohibits us to define a different set, because these are no representations of objects but labels for anything. These labels are called numbers, but we could have called them animals. In a new set of numbers we arrange the labels in a different way, for example: 2 1 3. 1 comes after 2, 3 comes after 1. In this set of numbers you keep the definition of addition (shift one place to the right on the number line). In this way you can prove that $1+1=3$, because if you shift the second element, 1, one position to the right, you end up at 3. Conclusion: $1+1=3$.

This is valid mathematical logic in the axiomatic system. But it is nonsense in the practical world. You can proof anything by using definitions and create a world of fantasies that has no relation with reality. This is not science, but nonsense.

Second, the Western method cheats on people's mind. Although they claim not to be based on empirical proof, the definition of addition and the use of the number line with 1, 2, 3 create the impression that the result is in accordance with our daily reality in which we see objects represented in numbers and the capacity of our brain to perform calculations with these numbers. This is a dishonest way of conducting science. It manipulates the use of examples in such a way that it seems as if the theory is in harmony with the practice.

Third, common sense tells you that the whole exercise of proving $1+1=2$ is absurd. Image 3.1 is a screenshot with the conclusion of Principia Mathematics by Russell and Whitehead that $1+1=2$.

Image 3.1: screenshot from Principia Mathematics. ¹⁶⁶

***54·43.** $\vdash \therefore \alpha, \beta \in 1 . \supset : \alpha \cap \beta = \Lambda . \equiv . \alpha \cup \beta \in 2$

Dem.

$$\begin{aligned} \vdash . *54·26 . \supset \vdash \therefore \alpha = t'x . \beta = t'y . \supset : \alpha \cup \beta \in 2 . &\equiv . x \neq y . \\ [*51·231] &\equiv . t'x \cap t'y = \Lambda . \\ [*13·12] &\equiv . \alpha \cap \beta = \Lambda \quad (1) \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \vdash . (1) . *11·11·35 . \supset \\ \vdash \therefore (\exists x, y) . \alpha = t'x . \beta = t'y . \supset : \alpha \cup \beta \in 2 . &\equiv . \alpha \cap \beta = \Lambda \quad (2) \end{aligned}$$

$$\vdash . (2) . *11·54 . *52·1 . \supset \vdash . \text{Prop}$$

From this proposition it will follow, when arithmetical addition has been defined, that $1 + 1 = 2$.

In 2003 BBC Television started a television series called QI (Quite Interesting), a comedy game show in which a panel comments on questions that look obscure. In episode one of the 2008-2009 series the presenter shows image 3.1 and asks the panel: "What is this about?" After some wrong answers he explains the genius of Bertrand Russell in proving that $1+1=2$.

Panelist and comedian David Mitchell comments: *"It is a bit late for the twentieth century to prove that. There has been a lot of engineering and economics based on the concept that $1+1=2$. If you would find out that it does not equal 2, what do we do? Burn everything. Anything could fall on our heads. Money, you might as well eat it. Forget civilization!"*¹⁶⁷

Mitchell got it right with common sense. Since a proof was needed that was not based on empirical reality but solely on the construction of axioms and theorems, it was not certain that the outcome would indeed be: 2. Suppose that the outcome was 3, which is undoubtedly possible as I have demonstrated above. Then surely all engineers had got it wrong when they built houses and bridges. The doctor got it wrong when they conducted heart surgeries. They use practical mathematics based on the concept that $1+1=2$. So everything based on practical mathematics, would collapse. What does it mean that everything did not collapse? That the exercise of Russell and Whitehead was not an exercise in science, but in nonsense. If you detach mathematics from its empirical basis, it leads to invalid knowledge.

3.3.1.2 The Ramanujan series

Take another example: the Ramanujan series, named after its creator, Indian mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan (1887-1920). Ramanujan used Western mathematics to calculate the result of an infinite series: $1+2+3+\dots$ till infinity. A video on YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-I6XTVZXww&t=357s> - explains the "amazing" results. The presenter begins: *"I am going to give you an astounding result."* A viewer might think that the answer is infinity. But no, remarkable the answer is $-1/12$: minus one divided by twelve. The presenter: *"It is amazing. I first saw this when I started learning about string theory. And what is even more bizarre, is that this result is used in many areas of physics."* The presenter shows a book on string theory where the Ramanujan series is explained but with no example in physics of its practical use. As a non-mathematician you are in awe for such a genius, until you start to use your common sense.

Suppose you get one dollar and then two and then three etc. What would your common sense tell you? For sure, $1+2+3+\dots$ till infinity will make you enormously rich. But Western mathematics tells you that you end up in debt! At the end of the day all the money you have received has gone in smoke without any reason and instead you have to pay the donor $1/12$ dollar (8,3 dollar cent). Who is crazy: you or the Western mathematician? Western mathematics will tell you that you are crazy because you don't understand the amazing operations of mathematics that produces *"an astounding result"*.

Where did Western mathematics go wrong? The video explains the "genius" calculation in three steps in which they use three formulas:

$$S_1 = 1-1+1-1+1-1+\dots$$

$$S_2 = 1-2+3-4+5-6+\dots$$

$$S = 1+2+3+4+5+6+\dots$$

Step 1: The answer of S_1 depends on where you stop at the calculation. If you stop at the second number (an even place) the answer is 0: $1-1=0$. If you stop at the third number (an odd place) the answer is 1: $1-1+1=1$.

Now they pull a trick. To arrive at the end result, they take the average of 1 and 0 which is $1/2$. Why do they use this trick? The presenter: *"Do we stop at an odd or an even point? We don't know. So we take the average of the two."* If you don't know what to do, you

just make something up, even if it contradicts common sense. Why is it logical to take the average of the two? No explanation is given, because no explanation is required in the axiom system.

In non-Western mathematics the system of numbers is based on empirical representation of quantity. So 4 is a representations of a collection of four objects. Infinity is not a number. Infinity does not represent a collection of objects. Infinity is a concept. You can not perform calculations with infinity as if it is a number just like you can not calculate a number with a different concept, say an apple.

It does not make sense to say $1-1+1-1+\text{apple}$ is something. In a similar way you can not perform a calculation with infinity and say the average of $1-1+1-1+\text{infinity}$ is something, in this case $\frac{1}{2}$.

If you use common sense the only valid answer of the calculation is: the result depends on where you stop. If you stop at an even place the sum is 0 and if you stop at an odd place the sum is 1. If you get one dollar and then give one dollar away and then you get one dollar and next you give it away, the end result depends on when you stop. The only possible outcomes are that you either have one or no dollar. At no point in time you will have 50 cents. So you can not assume that the outcome of $S_1 = \frac{1}{2}$. Yet, if you disregard empirical proof and use axioms, you can produce a nonsensical result and present it as valid knowledge. The first manipulation of the Ramanujan series is the use of a calculation (average) with something that is not a number: infinity.

Step 2: the answer for S_2 ($S_2 = 1-2+3-4+5-6+\dots$) also depends on where you stop.

$$1-2 = -1$$

$$1-2+3 = 2$$

$$1-2+3-4 = -2$$

$$1-2+3-4+5 = 3$$

$$1-2+3-4+5-6 = -3$$

Depending on where you stop you get an answer like 2, -2, 3, -3, 4, -4 etc. These are all integers. At no point in the series you get a fraction. Yet, the result of the calculation in the Ramanujan series is a fraction: $\frac{1}{4}$. How do they arrive at a fraction? They perform a calculation trick, the second manipulation. They copy S_2 twice in a row. Then they shift the second row visually one position to the right. Next they add up the two rows, so you get:

$$S_2 = 1-2+3-4+5-6+\dots$$

$$S_2 = 1-2+3-4+5+\dots$$
 Now they add the two rows.

$$2S_2 = 1-1+1-1+1-1+\dots$$
 The series on the right is S_1 .

$$S_1 = 1-1+1-1+1-1+\dots$$

$$S_1 = \frac{1}{2} \text{ (see the outcome of step 1)}$$

$$2S_2 = \frac{1}{2}.$$

$$S_2 = \frac{1}{4}.$$

The outcome is the result of a trick based on axioms. Infinity is used in a calculation because it is defined as a number. If you do that, you can calculate averages and thus arrive at a fraction, although at no point in time the answer in the series produces a fraction.

Step 3: the answer for S ($S=1+2+3+4+5+6+\dots$) also uses a calculation trick, the third manipulation: $S - S_2$.

$$S = 1+2+3+4+5+6+\dots$$

$$S_2 = 1-2+3-4+5-6+\dots$$
 Now they subtract the second row from the first row.

$S - S_2 = 0 + 4 + 0 + 8 + 0 + 12 + \dots$ Leave out the zeros.

$S - S_2 = 4 + 8 + 12 + 16 + \dots$ This can be written as

$S - S_2 = 4 * [1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + \dots]$. The series between the brackets is S.

$S - S_2 = 4 * S$.

$S_2 = \frac{1}{4}$ (see the outcome of step 2)

$S - \frac{1}{4} = 4 * S$.

$4 * S - S = - \frac{1}{4}$.

$3 * S = - \frac{1}{4}$.

$S = - \frac{1}{12}$.

Now they have proven with Western mathematics that if you keep getting one, two, three dollars etc. for an endless period of time, at the end of the day the money suddenly disappears and you end up in debt. How is this possible?

I have argued that you can not calculate with infinity as if infinity is a number. There is second objection to how Western mathematics deals with infinity. For the purpose of calculation (what is the end result of $1 + 2 + 3 + \dots$?) there should be an end result according to the axiom system, because they use the two-value logic: true or false. The notion of uncertainty is not part of their logic. Infinity is about uncertainty. Infinity has no end, so logically you can not have an end result of an infinity series. If you have a world of fantasy, then you create a system that produces fantastic results. It is possible to have an end result of a series that has no end. The end result can be crazy, but it is still regarded as valid knowledge in Western mathematics because it conforms to the axiom model of reasoning.

My critique of the foundation of Western mathematics regards five points.

First, it creates a world of fantasies that has no link with the real world and thus leads to invalid knowledge.

Second, the axiom system uses a concept - infinity - that leads to a logical contradiction in its operations: it is logically impossible to get an end result for a series that has no end. Yet, they just do it.

Third, Western mathematics relies on a limited logic: two-value logic (true or false) and thus forces any mathematical operation into this logic. But some operations have more options, notable uncertainty. By excluding uncertainty from its operation Western mathematics is obliged to produce end results of calculations that make no sense. They can not accept that a definite outcome is not possible.

Fourth, Western mathematics manipulates knowledge by using tricks to prove its point. It is not a genuine search for knowledge.

Fifth, Western mathematics makes simple matter complex. A major challenge in decolonizing mathematics is to make math simpler and not more complex. It traces and criticizes the complex math that can be replaced by simple reasoning. As is shown with the example of $1 + 1 = 2$, Western mathematics makes simple matters complex, and present it as the work of a genius. Decolonizing mathematics exposes such complexities as the work of a fool, not of a genius.

These points of critique can be used for a more intensive critique of the foundation of Western mathematics and its axiom system.

3.3.2 The role of authority

Western mathematics is positioned in science as the ultimate form of scientific knowledge. You can not criticize the foundation of mathematics, because it is solid and accepted all over the world. Mathematicians have acquired an unquestionable authority in science.

The role of authority in colonized science is to shut down criticism of knowledge and thus prevent the development of critical knowledge and keep the mind colonized. DTM aims to strengthen the self-confidence of knowledge producers by questioning the authority of Western knowledge producers.

Mathematics is a discipline in which the authority of knowledge is enshrined in a language of complex formulas that few people can master to the full. Those who have, are regarded as the high priests of science. The idea that non-mathematicians can question professional mathematicians seems ridiculous. So how are non-mathematicians to understand what decolonizing mathematics means?

One way is to bring decolonial professional mathematicians, like C.K. Raju, in the game. They act as the counter-authority in the debate between colonial and decolonial mathematicians. But then still we have to rely on authority without understanding the issues involved in decolonizing mathematics. The other way is to approach mathematics with common sense. Common sense is a strong antidote against nonsense in the name of science.

In the two examples above I have shown that a decolonial critique of the foundations of Western mathematics is possible with common sense. A major challenge for decolonial mathematics is to delve into the foundations of the axiom system and show how it produces invalid knowledge.

3.4 A critique of the use of Western mathematics

3.4.1 Mathematics and natural laws

Galileo (1564-1642) said: "*Mathematics is the language in which God wrote the universe.*"¹⁶⁸ He meant that in order to understand nature you need to know mathematics, because nature is organized according to mathematical laws. The idea that nature is organized along mathematical rules is pervasive in Western science. If you understand the mathematical laws of nature, you can predict how nature will react in certain circumstances. In this view mathematics expresses the ultimate truth about nature.

Western science is based on the idea of natural laws. "*Natural laws,*" says V. Tabak, "*are important to science because natural laws are used. They are used to generate new scientific discoveries and to clarify old ones. Natural laws, mathematically expressed, form the basis of a great deal of scientific research.*"¹⁶⁹

This approach of the relationship between mathematics and natural laws leads to a number of problems.

First, it leads to a limited and distorted view of nature. Nature is a complex whole of living and non-living matter and creatures. Mathematics can lead to understanding of parts of nature, but nature is not organized along mathematical rules. R. Sheldrake remarks: "*Most of our experience is not mathematical. We taste food, feel angry, enjoy the beauty of flowers, laugh at jokes. In order to assert the primacy of mathematics, Galileo and his successors had to distinguish between what they called "primary qualities," which could be described mathematically, such as motion, size and weight, and "secondary qualities," like color and smell, which were subjective. They took the real world to be objective, quantitative and mathematical. Personal experience in the lived world was subjective, the realm of opinion and illusion, outside the realm of science.*"¹⁷⁰

So not all of nature operates according to mathematical laws. In fact, most processes in nature (living and nonliving) don't operate according to mathematical laws. If you would use mathematical rules to understand nature, you might easily go wrong. Decolonizing mathematics investigates these cases to show the limitations of Western mathematics.

Look at the following example: $2-1=1$. Take two objects and remove one, then the end result is one object. In Western knowledge production this is an absolute truth. In

decolonial knowledge production the result does not depend on a mathematical formula, but on actual conditions in reality. Under certain circumstances you might get another result, for example: $2-1=0$. Take the example of two birds in a tree. A hunter shoots one bird, that falls dead on the ground. How many birds will be left in the tree? If you use the mathematical formula, you would say that one bird is left. In practice, an outcome might be that there are no birds left, because the second bird might have flown away out of fear. The mathematical formula can not predict this outcome, because mathematics presumes independence of the actual conditions in reality. If you understand nature in a decolonial way, you understand the limitations of mathematics.

Second, Western mathematics is based on two-value logic: true or false. The two-value logic leads to a limited understanding of the world. In the real world something can be both true and false. Nature is not based on two-value logic. There is evolution, growth, decline, change, ruptures. How is the evolution from fish to human beings captured in mathematics? It can not be done. Taking mathematics as the key to understand nature limits our understanding of nature.

Third, by invoking mathematics as the language of nature, the research into what nature is and how it works misses a crucial element: consciousness. In the Eurocentric view nature is only conceptualized as matter: a physical substance that has length, breadth, height, and occupies a particular position in space. How do you deal with something that clearly exists, but is not a substance in space: consciousness. If you have a mathematical view of nature, the research into consciousness is limited to how the brain functions. You can not imagine research that looks into how something can exist that is nonphysical. That is relegated to religion, and is not part of science. But consciousness – what it is, how it works – should be studied from all perspectives, and should not be restricted to one that limits its character to the relationship with physical substances.

Fourth, if you view nature as a kind of machine that operates with mathematical rules you disguise the ethical basis of mathematics. And that can lead to disasters in dealing with nature. Ethics involves the relationship between human beings and nature. In non-Western knowledge systems respect for nature was the basis for this relationship. Respect was good. Disrespect was bad. The ethics could be founded in religion, spirituality or a way of life. A mechanical view of nature (through mathematics) takes these ethics out of the system of knowledge and supplants it with other ethics that basically disrespects nature, but hides the disrespect under the banner of objectivity. In a capitalist system that uses a mechanic view of nature this leads to the idea that nature can and should be manipulated and controlled for profit. The enormous problems of environment and the disequilibrium of eco-systems are the product of this view of nature. Western mathematics laid the basis for this view.

In the Western science mathematics is presented as a key to understand nature. In DTM it is other way around. Nature shows us the limitations of mathematics in understanding reality.

3.4.2 Mathematics and social sciences

The role of mathematics in the progress of technology with the natural sciences led to the idea that mathematics is the symbol of the ultimate truth. If a proposition can be backed with mathematical proof, then it certainly is true and right.

The methodology of social science became modeled after the natural sciences: observation (data collection) and reasoning (induction, deduction, validation).

In paragraph 2.3 I have explained the limitations that this brings upon the social sciences. Here I will deal with how mathematics is used in social sciences in such a way that it blocks the understanding of social reality and even produces lies.

Western science claims that the natural sciences have discovered the “laws of nature” through mathematics. In a similar way social sciences claim that they are in the business of discovering social laws that govern society. In natural sciences mathematics plays the

role of the carrier of the ultimate truth. The knowledge about nature is objective and mathematics shows this objectivity in the most excellent form; the laws are independent of the actions of human being.

Mathematical models are built to simulate social processes. It creates the illusion of objectivity, because it hides ethics behind mathematical formulas. That is the first decolonial critique of the use of mathematics in social sciences.

I will illustrate this with an example from economics: the so-called economic law of supply and demand which I dealt with briefly in paragraph 2.5.1. According to this law under a system of free competition the price of a good rises when the demand of that good rises while the supply remains constant. Similarly the price goes down when the demand remains constant and the supply increases. In economic theory mathematics is used to express this relationship in formulas and graphs. Thus mathematics becomes the language to describe economic behavior of human beings.

Why is this rule of supply and demand a social law? How do we explain this law? The Western answer to these questions starts with the assumption that there are social laws, whether we want it or not. They exist outside the influence of human beings. This was aptly expressed in the Marxist theory of world history. Karl Marx explains how social laws govern human history: *"In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political, and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness."*¹⁷¹

These laws operate independent of human will. In fact, it determines human will and consciousness.

The law of supply and demand is such a social law. It operates as an objective law in human societies where markets govern economic production and distribution of goods and services. Adam Smith explains the reason behind this law. An individual *"neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it... He is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. Nor is it always the worse for the society that it was no part of it. By pursuing his own interest, he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it."*¹⁷²

So, if everyone pursues his own selfish interest the law of supply and demand ensures an outcome that is accepted as satisfactory for everyone. There is no ethics involved. It is an objective social law.

In paragraph 2.5.1 I dealt with the response of Muhammad Baqir as-Sadr (1935-1980) to Adam Smith in which he argues that the law of supply and demand is not an objective law, but an expression of ethical values in a society. The ethics behind the law of supply and demand is called greed. Greed is not a law, but a choice. A mathematical expression of the law of supply and demand is not an illustration of objectivity of knowledge. It is an illustration of how a technique (mathematics) is used to hide the ethics behind social relations and the relationship of power that comes with the ethics. If there is a famine the demand for food would be very high while the supply would be very limited. According to capitalist ethics the owners of food should be protected against the hungry masses who would want to steal the food. A system of repression is needed to prevent the starving masses from attacking the food warehouses to survive. Decolonizing mathematics in social science is analyzing the mathematical techniques that are used to hide the ethics of the "social laws".

The second critique of the use of mathematics in social sciences is how it produces blatant lies to justify colonialism or paint a morally acceptable version of crimes against humanity. I will illustrate this with the example of the use of mathematics, specifically statistics, to describe the horrible system of the European enslavement of Africans.

A general trend among many white historians of enslavement (and their black followers trained by them) is the use of statistics to show that enslavement was not as bad a system as blacks might think.

Holland was one of the culprits of the trans-Atlantic enslavement of Africans. P.C. Emmer, a leading white historian in Dutch colonial history, discusses the morality of the Dutch regarding the trans-Atlantic enslavement: *"How guilty is Holland? Sometimes it is quite easy to just be a small country. Whatever you do, it can not be that bad, that much and that horrible compared to bigger countries. Does that hold for the Dutch slave trade? After all, the share of the Netherlands in the trade was not more than 5 percent. That means that 95% of all slaves from Africa to America was not brought by Dutch ships. England, Portugal and France have transported much more slaves."*¹⁷³

Statistics are used as an indicator of morality. The Dutch don't have to feel guilty about their role in the hideous crime of enslavement, because it was not big. But there is no relationship at all between morality and statistics. You don't have a higher sense of morality if you have enslaved less people. Morality is about whether to get involved in a crime at all, not how much you get involved.

Besides, the reason for the lower percentage for the Dutch is not that they did not want more. Brazil was the colony with the largest number of enslaved Africans. Initially it was colonized by the Dutch, but they were kicked out by their competitor Portugal. If the Dutch had managed to keep Brazil, they would be the largest enslavers. The reason they had a smaller share was not because they did not want a higher share. It was because they could not get a higher one. What kind of morality is that?

This type of reasoning is used in a lot of Western literature on black enslavement. A classical study of white scholars who use mathematics to show that the system of black enslavement was not as bad as many people think, is a study by R. Fogel and S. Engerman titled *Time on the Cross*. In fact, one proposition of their study is to show that *"the material (not psychological) conditions of the lives of slaves compared favourably with those of free industrial workers."*¹⁷⁴ Enslavement was better for the enslaved compared to capitalism for the free industrial workers!

Their technique is very simplistic. They conceptualize enslavement as a collection of indicators (variables) about the material condition of black people. Then they select the data for the indicators that fits in their storyline that slavery was not as bad as people think. Finally they provide an analytical framework for the storyline with the indicators to "prove" their propositions.

I will illustrate their technique with their analysis of whipping during enslavement.

They select data to show that whipping did not occur frequently: *"The only systematic record of whipping now available from an extended period comes from the diary of Bennet Barrow, a Louisiana planter who believed that to spare the rod was to spoil the slave. His plantation numbered 200 slaves, of whom 120 were in the labor force. The records show that over the course of two years a total of 160 whippings were administered, an average of 0,7 whipping per hand per year. About half of the hands were not whipped at all during the period."*¹⁷⁵

Enslavement in the USA lasted from around 1620 to 1865. Some 400.000 Africans were kidnapped and brought to the USA in that period. At the time of the legal abolition of enslavement in 1865 there were around 4 million enslaved Africans and 250.000 who were already free during slavery. In 250 years tens of millions more were born free and enslaved after birth. Even with the most superficial knowledge of statistics one would not dare to use the numbers registered by one enslaver during two years and 200 enslaved Africans to draw general conclusions about whipping during 250 years of enslavement

involving tens of millions of enslaved people. Yet this is what Fogel and Engerman have done.

The US is a country where – compared to the Caribbean - there is extensive documentation of how enslaved Africans experienced enslavement. Austin Steward was an enslaved African and escaped to freedom in 1813. He wrote his memoirs in which he mentions whipping on a regular basis: *"The overseer always went around with a whip, about nine feet long, made of the toughest kind of cowhide, the but-end of which was loaded with lead, and was about four or five inches in circumference, running to a point at the opposite extremity. This made a dreadful instrument of torture, and, when in the hands of a cruel overseer, it was truly fearful. With it, the skin of an ox or a horse could be cut through. Hence, it was no uncommon thing to see the poor slaves with their backs mangled in a most horrible manner. Our overseer, thus armed with his cowhide, and with a large bull-dog behind him, followed the slaves all day; and, if one of them fell in the rear from any cause, this cruel weapon was plied with terrible force."*¹⁷⁶

This is a totally different picture from a victim who was enslaved for twenty years before escaping to freedom. It is not only about frequency (every day), but also about the impact of whipping, which the statistics of Fogel and Engerman do not show.

The data of Fogel and Engerman are scanty and very selective. They don't take other data such as Steward's biography into account. Furthermore, the variable they use for whipping gives an erroneous view of the practice of whipping.

What is the practice of whipping? Apparently Fogel and Engerman have in mind the end result of the practice: the actual physical contact of the whip and the skin of a person. So if you collect statistics on whipping, then you collect data on the physical contact and look for material such as the one that was collected by Barrow. Steward shows that the practice of whipping is a process, not an incident. The crucial variable that characterizes this process is not the actual physical contact, but the threat of using the whip. What variable expresses this threat? The duration of the time during which a whipping could be started. That could happen to any enslaved person during any time of the day, every day of the week. It was inherent to the system! So there was always the possibility that an enslaved person could get whipped if he didn't follow the instruction of the enslaver.

Already in the process of collecting statistical data on the nature of whipping during slavery Fogel and Engerman manipulate the outcome by selecting a variable to create a favourable impression of enslavement.

The processing of the data is also done with the same aim. They calculate the average whipping per hand per year. The calculation is as follows: 160 whippings in two years is 80 whippings per year. For an enslaved population of 200 at Barrow's plantation, of which 160 are labourers, this is 0,7 whippings per labourer. Fogel and Engerman conclude: *"About half of the hands were not whipped at all during the period."* (160-80=80).

The calculation creates the impression that whipping was infrequent. But there is another calculation possible that provides the opposite conclusion. With 80 whippings per year the average whippings per week was $80/52=1.5$! So every week 1-2 persons got whipped and all the others could be witness to the whipping.

Fogel and Engerman provide an analytical framework for a storyline that whipping was not as bad as one might think: *"There was nothing exceptional about the use of whipping, to enforce discipline among slaves until the beginning of the nineteenth century. It must be remembered that through the centuries whipping was considered a fully acceptable form of punishment, not merely for criminals but also for honest men or women who in some way shirked their duties. Whipping for wives, for example, was even sanctified in some version of the Scripture."*¹⁷⁷ Whipping is not a big deal. It happens everywhere; even the Bible sanctions it. What can a scientist do in such cases?

They use a common technique in Eurocentric science regarding colonial crimes: use a generic label for systems that are very different so the difference between a horrible crime and a light offense is washed away.

When one thinks of a husband beating his wife in a marriage the beating is not inherent to the system of marriage. Not every marriage is bound to be characterized by beating. In a system of slavery whipping is inherent to the maintenance of the system. Terrorism is crucial to maintain a system where human beings are forced to work for free and are sold like cattle. And beating is not done with a slap of the hand, but with a tool of torture. Steward describes a whipping in a story about his sister: *"One pleasant Sabbath morning, as I was passing the house where she lived, on my way to the Presbyterian church, where I was sent to ring the bell as usual, I heard the most piteous cries and earnest pleadings issuing from the dwelling. To my horror and the astonishment of those with me, my poor sister made her appearance, weeping bitterly, and followed by her inhuman master, who was polluting the air of that clear Sabbath morning, with the most horrid imprecations and threatenings, and at the same time flourishing a large raw-hide. Very soon his bottled wrath burst forth, and the blows, aimed with all his strength, descended upon the unprotected head, shoulders and back of the helpless woman, until she was literally cut to pieces. She writhed in his powerful grasp, while shriek after shriek cried away in heart-rending moanings; and yet the inhuman demon continued to beat her, though her pleading cries had ceased, until obliged to desist from the exhaustion of his own strength."*¹⁷⁸

Mathematics enables Fogel and Engerman to eradicate the difference between whipping in a system of marriage and whipping in slavery. It is just about comparing the frequency of the physical contact between the person who gets whipped and the whip.

Fogel and Engerman are in a tradition that created a branch in economic history called *cliometrics*, the use of mathematics in history. Fogel even won the Nobel prize for economics. But if we peel off the appearance of objectivity that mathematics provides, the end result is an ideological construction to present a crime against humanity as a legitimate social system. This is not science. This is an exercise in how to lie with statistics.

3.5 The concept of reverse engineering in mathematics

"Reverse engineering is a process where an engineered artefact (such as a car, a jet engine, or a software program) is deconstructed in a way that reveals its innermost details, such as its design and architecture," says E. Eilam. *"This is similar to scientific research that studies natural phenomena, with the difference that no one commonly refers to scientific research as reverse engineering, simply because no one knows for sure whether or not nature was ever engineered."*¹⁷⁹

Reverse engineering is a way of generating knowledge in a reverse order. You know the end result – a pyramid – but you don't know how it was constructed. You know for sure that it was not constructed with the knowledge of Western mathematics. Yet a pyramid is widely acknowledged as a great work of engineering. The engineering part has been studied in detail: the technique of moving huge quantities of stones, the production and cutting of the stone blocks, the construction of the pyramid etc. Obviously, the engineers have used a mathematical framework and analysis as I have argued in paragraph 3.2. The question in reverse engineering in mathematics is: can we develop alternative systems of mathematics that is not based on Western concepts yet provides a sound mathematical basis for engineers? This is not an easy task, but not impossible as the development of non-Euclidean geometry has shown (see paragraph 3.2).

There have been attempts to understand the theoretical basis for the building of Egyptian pyramids, but then with the tools of Western mathematics.¹⁸⁰ A typical example is the discussion about the golden ratio as a theoretical basis for building the Great Pyramid at Giza.¹⁸¹

Another example of reverse engineering is the work done by Ron Eglias on African fractals.¹⁸² A fractal is a geometrical shape that can be subdivided in parts, each of which is (at least approximately) a reduced/size copy of the whole. Fractal shapes are

commonly found in nature, from snow flakes to leaves of a tree. Eglias discovered that in African design and architecture the designers and architects used patterns known as fractal geometry. He tried to figure out whether the African fractal designs were intuitive or consciously shaped. And although there are intuitive designs, he discovered that many patterns were consciously constructed and can be understood with the tools of Western fractal mathematics. The Africans never used these tools, so they must have had their own tools in developing the designs. He talked to many designers to figure out what tools they used. This is reverse engineering of a different kind. On the one hand it uses Western mathematical tools to understand the way the designs have been constructed (the regular reverse engineering). On the other hand it acknowledges that there are other tools and methods (another mathematics) that create these patterns with their own logic and arguments. Sometimes the logic and arguments come from African religious practices. Sometimes they used algorithms that are replicated in Western mathematics.

So reverse engineering is not only a way to understand a design by using Western mathematical tools. Reverse engineering is much more complex. It tries to figure out if there is another basis for mathematics that is not Western yet enables a mathematical analysis to make this type of engineering possible. This is the future challenge for decolonial mathematicians.

3.6 A new educational system for mathematics

Mathematics is an important part of formal education. A study in England shows that by the age of 16, children in England will typically have spent approximately 2,000 hours learning mathematics in school.¹⁸³ Children learn basic calculation in primary school. In secondary school they can learn about the basic theorems in different branches of mathematics (geometry, calculus, statistics etc). In higher education mathematics has a prominent place in different disciplines of science.

How does decolonizing mathematics impact the educational system? It depends on the level of education. On the academic level decolonial mathematics goes back to the critique of Western mathematics.

New textbooks are needed in mathematical education in the academia that criticize the Eurocentric approach in the historiography of mathematics and more specifically the presentation of Western mathematics as a superior form of mathematics compared to non-Western mathematics which. Furthermore, the acknowledgement of the ancient Greek role that their African teachers had played in the formation of Greek thought should be part of this historiography. The racist nature of Western science that contrasts European logical thinking with non-European illogical thinking should be exposed in such textbooks. The renaming of mathematical achievements after the original authors or inventors should be part of the rewriting of the history of mathematics.

The mathematics departments should engage into the critique of the weak foundations of Western mathematics that produces fantasies and invalid knowledge: the limitations of its two-value logic, the logical contradiction in its operations, the manipulation of its proofs and the need to make mathematics more simple rather than more complex. The critique should be a part of breaking the authority of knowledge in Western mathematics and more generally in Western science. Mathematical research into reverse engineering should be part of research programs.

In social sciences the critique of the misuse of mathematics should be directed at a fundamental level: how mathematics covers up the ethics in many concepts in social science, how the concept of natural laws and social laws are fundamentally different in regards to human will and consciousness and how mathematics is used to produce lies about social relations.

The most important work that has to be done is in the academia. The result of that work can then be translated to the level of secondary and primary education. There is already

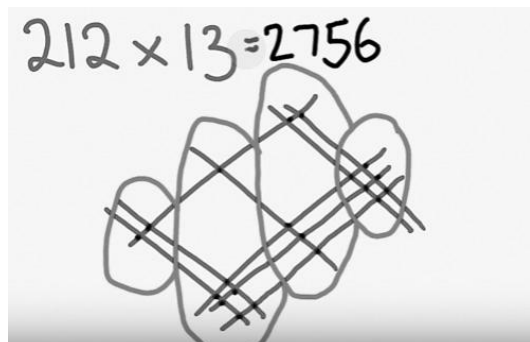
work being done for the secondary and primary education to make math more interesting for children by connected it with issues of social justice. There are math teachers in different parts of the world that use mathematics in teachings about social justice.¹⁸⁴ They teach classical math but in the process of teaching they use mathematical methods to analyze issues of social justice. It makes math classes more interesting for students because the application of math in issues they care about creates a better understanding of the mathematical techniques. It is a pedagogical technique that produces tangible results.¹⁸⁵

Research into reverse engineering might bring up issues as non-Western methods of calculation that can be used in secondary or primary education. Take the example of the Chinese method of multiplying numbers and solving algebraic equations as explained in a video on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SZw8jpfAk0&t=105s>. In calculus Western mathematics has developed a particular method to calculate say 13×212 .

$$\begin{array}{r} 212 \\ 13 \\ \hline 636 \\ 212 \\ \hline 2756 \end{array}$$

In Chinese mathematics a simple method of drawing lines and counting the intersection produces the same results (see image 3.2).¹⁸⁶

Image 3.2: Chinese method of multiply numbers



Some students might find one method better than the other. But they should be encouraged to learn both methods and decide for themselves what suits them best. They could use both methods and compare the results. Similar examples of non-Western methods of mathematical operations that could be used today are to be found in India (calculation of square roots) or Africa (working with unit fractions). Decolonial mathematics in education will research the contributions that have been made by other civilizations to integrate them in new textbooks on the level of primary and secondary education.

3.7 Conclusion

Western mathematics took Eurocentric epistemology to its limits. The axiom system defines the need to start with propositions and concepts that should be accepted without proof. And from there you set up rules of logic to create a fantasy world that does not match the real world and yet is presented as the pinnacle of science. And the pinnacle of science is regarded as a creation of Western civilization. It positions this civilization as the only one that is imbued with rational thinking. Other civilizations are characterized by

irrational thinking. It is the contrast between the intellectual and the idiot. And the intellectual is symbolized by Greece as the cradle of Western civilization. This narrative was part of racist ideas that crept into knowledge production in the West. The story of the relationship between racism and knowledge production is a core part of DTM.

4. A DTM theory of racism

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a DTM theory of racism and explains how and why the concept of racism became the basis of Eurocentric knowledge production and the colonization of the mind. I define racism as “*a global system of economic, social, political and cultural institutions that organise the relationship between human beings on the basis of superiority and inferiority.*” In this definition racism is seen as a system of institutions that create the environment and infrastructure for racist feelings (prejudices, antagonistic feelings, attitudes, ideas) and human interaction in the personal sphere (‘everyday racism’).

Racism has not always existed in the history of mankind, nor will it stay for ever. At some point in time in the future human beings will view each other through the lens of respect, dignity, equality, solidarity and humanity and cast away the legacy of the past five hundred years. Until that time we need to deal with racism and its role in the colonization of the mind.

The racist system came into existence with colonialism. The institutions have developed in the course of centuries during which they changed in various ways. Their main continuous characteristics are:

1. The organization of human relations along the lines of superiority and inferiority in economics, social relations, political systems and culture.
2. The production of concepts of superiority/inferiority to justify the system.
3. The link of these concepts to the nature of the authority of knowledge production.
4. The creation and institutionalization of mechanisms for colonizing the mind.

In the previous chapter I have explained the notion of a concept as an idea that describes and explains certain aspects of the social and natural world. A concept consists of five elements: terminology, selection of observations (facts), analysis (storyline and logic), theory (relation to other concepts in a bigger narrative) and ethics.

Now I will introduce the concept of the authority of knowledge production. The authority of knowledge production is based on the collection of institutions in a society that is regarded as the source of valid knowledge. Nowadays universities and research institutes are regarded as the sources of valid knowledge. The concepts that they produce are embedded in the educational system and in culture (media, art, cultural institutions). They are the foundations on which policies of governments and other administrative institutions are built.

In this chapter I will trace the development of racist concepts in colonialism and link that to the authority of knowledge production. I am indebted to Ramon Grosfoguel for sharing his insights with me and helping me to develop this narrative.

I will deal with three concepts of racism that have been developed with colonialism:

- Theological racism: the concept of superiority/inferiority that is argued from theology and is linked to theologians as the authority of knowledge production.
- Biological racism: the concept of superiority/inferiority that is argued from philosophy and the natural sciences and is linked to philosophers and natural scientists as the authority of knowledge production.
- Cultural racism: the concept of superiority/inferiority that is argued from the social sciences and is linked to social scientists as the authority of knowledge production.

4.2 Theological racism

4.2.1 The authority of knowledge at the start of colonialism

"We came here to serve God and the king, and also to get rich", writes Bernal Díaz del Castillo (1492–1584), who participated as a soldier in the invasion of Mexico under Hernán Cortés and wrote an account of the events.¹⁸⁷ He was honest about the greed of the Spaniards, but even greed needs to be put in a framework: serving God and the king.

The Spanish invasion of the Americas started in 1492. The rise of Western science started in the second half of the seventeenth century, 150 years later. During that period the authority of knowledge production laid at the Christian theological institutions. The theologians provided the framework for the understanding of the world. The Bible was the source of knowledge and ethics. True and false, right or wrong are judged by references to the Bible and the interpretation of the Bible by Christian theologians.

European societies were theocracies. There was no separation of Church and state. The Church made laws, had courts that prosecuted people and could sentence them to death. To understand the authority of knowledge production one can look at how critique of social practices was articulated. It was formulated with reference to theology. Take the critique of the corruption of the Catholic Church.

At the start of colonialism the Catholic Church was thoroughly corrupted. Priests charged parishioners for delivering the sacraments. The Church charged fees for the ordination of the priests and the consecration of bishops. Everything was for sale, including salvation. An indulgency is a declaration from the Church that says that somebody who committed a sin, will get a reduction in punishment after death. The recipient of an indulgence must say a specified prayer, visit a particular place or perform specific good works. The Church sold indulgencies to sinners.

The top Church leaders lived in luxury. Instead of living a pious life many monks spent their time drinking in taverns or chasing women. In 1490 Rome counted 6.800 prostitutes (six percent of the population). Virtually every priest in Rome kept a concubine.

In 1517, almost two decades after the start of Spanish colonialism in the Americas, the German theologian Martin Luther (1483-1546) revolted against the Catholic Church. He formulated 95 theses against the abuses of the Church and thus started the Reformation, that led to a schism in the Christian community. He did not critique Christianity or religion itself, as was done later in the European Enlightenment. His critique was framed within Christian theology, because that was the dominant framework of knowledge production. For example, he asks the question: if the Pope has the power to free souls from purgatory, why does he not do so out of Christian duty rather than by selling indulgencies? In Christian theology purgatory is the phase after physical death in which God will decide on the final fate of a person. (S)he either goes to hell or to heaven depending on how (s)he has dealt with sins during her/his lifetime.

Even questions about nature were interpreted from the perspective of the Bible. Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), a Dominican friar, adhered to the astronomical model of Copernicus (1473-1543) in which the sun rather than the earth was presented as the centre of the universe. He was declared a heretic and burned alive. Later, Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) declared his support for the Copernican model. But he recanted his position and escaped execution. Instead, he was sentence to life in prison.

This is the tradition and intellectual climate in Europe in which ideas about the people of the Americas were articulated.

4.2.2 Religion and colonization

The Spanish colonizers were discussing the question whether the Indigenous people were human beings or beasts. There were discussions whether they had a soul or not, which is

an essential characteristic of a human being. In Spain there were drawings of Indigenous people with a human body without a head, but with eyes, a nose and a mouth on the chest. One friar, Tomás Ortiz, who became Bishop of Santa Marta, compared them to animals: *"There is no justice among them. . . . [T]hey are like asses, stupid, crazed, having no sense, considering it nothing to kill and be killed; they don't tell the truth unless it benefits them, they are inconsistent . . . have the vices of beasts . . . are not capable of understanding doctrine . . . are traitors, cruel, vengeful, and never pardon . . . lazy, thieves . . . of low and mean judgment . . . are as cowardly as rabbits, dirty as pigs, they eat lice, spiders, and raw worms . . . have no art or human skills . . . are like brute animals. In all, I say, that never did God create people with so much vice and animal behavior."*¹⁸⁸

In general, the Indigenous people were seen as humans, but of an inferior type that can be enslaved. In 1513 the crown issued a document titled *Requirimiento* (Requirement) that the Spaniards should read out to the Indigenous people when they arrived in the Americas. It was in Spanish, a language the Indigenous people could not understand. It was even read out at empty beaches.

A speech normally began with invoking the authority of God to justify the occupation of Indigenous land and the subjugation, exploitation and enslavement of its people. It said that the Pope as head of the Church had given their land to the Spanish king. It asked the Indigenous people to *"acknowledge the Church as the Ruler and Superior of the whole world, and the high priest called Pope, and in his name the King and Queen Doña Juana our lords, in his place, as superiors and lords and kings of these islands."*¹⁸⁹

Then followed an ominous threat: *"If you do not do this, and maliciously make delay in it, I certify to you that, with the help of God, we shall powerfully enter into your country, and shall make war against you in all ways and manners that we can, and shall subject you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and of their Highnesses; we shall take you and your wives and your children, and shall make slaves of them, and as such shall sell and dispose of them as their Highnesses may command; and we shall take away your goods, and shall do you all the mischief and damage that we can."*¹⁹⁰

A notary was requested to give a testimony in writing that the requirement was properly read. Racism became law.

The economic institution of Spanish colonialism that embodied the racist relationship was the *encomienda*. The Spanish crown gave or "commended" Indigenous people to Spaniards (the *encomenderos*). They had the right to exploit Indigenous labour or demand tribute from them. In return, the *encomenderos* were obliged to provide religious instruction for their "Indians" and to protect them.

Columbus introduced this institution in Ayiti in 1495. He ordered that all Tainos over fourteen years of age who lived near gold mines should pay the Spaniards a basket full of gold every three months. Those who lived away from the mines should bring twenty-five pounds of cotton per person. In practice this meant enslavement and exploitation of the Indigenous people. The Spaniards committed horrible atrocities against the Indigenous people.

In 1510, almost twenty years after the first journey of Columbus, three Dominican monks arrived in Ayiti: Friar Pedro de Córdoba, Friar Antonio Montesinos, and Friar Bernardo de Santo Tomás. Francisco Rodés describes their remarkable history that came to a climax in a sermon on December 21, 1511: *"For their communal house, they used a humble dwelling with a straw roof, a dirt floor, and rustic furniture they made themselves. One day a stranger appeared at their door. He had committed a crime of passion and was returning after spending three years as a fugitive, hiding in the mountains. Showing signs of a profound repentance, and a sincere desire to give his life to the Order, he was accepted as a novice. Juan Garcés would become one of the first martyrs for the faith in the New World. Garcés surprised the friars with accounts of Spanish soldiers' cruel and bloodthirsty treatment of the Taino. He told how they kidnapped natives, forcing them to work as slaves for wealthy Spanish leaders and in the search for gold; how they*

plundered whole villages, raping women and using dogs to hunt those who fled to the mountains. These firsthand accounts shocked and shamed the friars, who were now convinced they could not remain neutral in the face of such barbarism. After months of prayer and meditation, they decided that on the fourth Sunday of Advent one of them would rebuke such practices from the pulpit. All of the friars agreed to the message, each signing the dramatic demand for repentance by the Spaniards. Friar Antonio Montesinos, their most eloquent speaker, was chosen to preach the sermon. Like the good missionaries they were, the friars went through the streets of the town, house by house, inviting everyone to attend mass on that Sunday. They also invited each of the ruling Spanish authorities, including the governor. Since the friars enjoyed a well-earned recognition for their life of self-denial, the sanctuary was filled, all dressed in their finest clothing, eager to please the pious friars."¹⁹¹

They did not know that they would get an unpleasant surprise. The sermon by Montesinos contained the strongest possible religious condemnation of Spanish rule: *"Tell me by what right and with what justice do you hold these Indians in such horrible servitude? With what authority have you waged such detestable war, bringing havoc and death never before seen on these people who were living peacefully and calmly on their lands? How can you keep them so exhausted and oppressed, without giving them food or curing their illnesses, which were caused by the excessive work you have forced upon them and by which you cause their deaths, or more accurately put, by which you murder them. All of this so you can daily acquire more gold. Are these not human beings? Do they not have rational spirits? Are you not obliged to love them as you love yourselves? Do you not understand this? Do you not feel this? How can you remain lethargically in such a deep slumber? Be assured that living like this you cannot save yourselves any more than can the Moors or the Turks, who do not have or want the faith of Jesus Christ."*¹⁹²

His audience was shocked. That very afternoon they went to the house of the Dominicans to demand that Montesinos should retract his sermon at the next prayer.

The next Sunday Montesinos held a new sermon but he did not retract. Instead he repeated his earlier statement. He also told his listeners that they would not be offered the Sacraments unless they repented and ceased their crimes against the Indigenous people. Rodés: *"Frustrated that their intimidation of the friars had failed, the colonial leaders appealed to the authority of the king. It was the king who gave property rights over discovered lands and authorized enslavement of the Taino. Therefore, reasoned the colonists, the friars' opposition was defiance against the authority and the interests of the Crown."*¹⁹³

An early version of Christian Liberation Theology had entered Spanish colonies opposing the use of Christianity to justify the enslavement of the Indigenous people. The following decades monks and theologians lobbied at the Spanish crown for a better treatment of the Indigenous people. It had some effect.

In 1542 the crown promulgated the so-called New Laws that intended to improve the life of the Indigenous people. The New Laws consisted of fifty-four articles, of which twenty-three directly concerned the status and treatment of the "Indians". The most important article stated clearly: *"We ordain and command that from hence forward for no cause of war nor any other whatsoever, though it be under the title of rebellion, nor by ransom nor in other manner can an Indian be made a slave, and we will that they be treated as our vassals of the Crown of Castile since such they are."*¹⁹⁴

The Indigenous people could not be sold or inherited by the children of the *encomendadores*. The latter rebelled. In Peru, they executed Blasco Núñez Vela, the first viceroy sent by the crown to implement the New Laws. In Mexico, a representative of the crown, Tello de Sandoval, averted a rebellion by abolishing on the spot some of the strictest requirements of the laws.

In 1524 the king had established the *Royal and Supreme Council of the Indies* as a body to administer the invaded territories in the Americas. Some priests had lobbied in Spain

to introduce legislation against the *encomienda*. Bartholomé de Las Casas (1484-1566) played a leading role in this.

By 1550, Las Casas had persuaded the king to instruct the *Council of the Indies* to convene a special committee of theologians and jurists to make a judgement on the following question: "*Is it lawful for the King of Spain to wage war on the Indians, before preaching the faith to them, in order to subject them to his rule, so that afterward they may be more easily instructed in the faith?*"

The *Council* formed a jury of fourteen experts (the *Junta*) to sit on the case. Las Casas would present his case. The *encomenderos* in the Americas and their supporters in Spain recruited a renowned scholar, Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (1494-1573) to defend their position. Their confrontation is known as the famous Debate of Valladolid.

4.2.3 The debate of Valladolid

4.2.3.1 The organization of the debate

Sepúlveda had a high reputation as an expert on Aristotle and Christian theology. Although Aristotle was not a Christian (he lived from 384-322 BCE) his studies on ethics and metaphysics influenced many Christian theologians. Sepúlveda had translated two of Aristotle's works. He served as an assistant to Cardinal Tomás de Vio Cayetano (1469–1534) in the preparation of the New Testament in Spanish. He was a major figure in Spain in the Counter Reformation that attacked Martin Luther. In 1535, he was named chaplain of King Charles. Sepúlveda was a major intellectual force in Spain in those days. Around 1547 the president of the *Council of the Indies* and a supporter of the *encomenderos*, Cardinal Loaysa asked Sepúlveda to take part in the debate and present the position of the *encomenderos*. Sepúlveda had never visited the Americas and gained his knowledge from accounts that were published in those days, especially the work of Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés. Oviedo had visited the Americas five times and stayed for a while. His accounts were widely read.

Bartholomé de Las Casas (1484-1566) had stayed in the Americas for forty years. In 1502, at the age of eighteen, he went with his father to Ayiti. They became *encomendores*. Las Casas participated in slave raids and military expeditions against the native Taíno population. He owned enslaved people, mined gold and operated a farm. Later, he had a change of heart and became a priest in 1510. In 1554 he was consecrated as the first Bishop of Chiapas in Mexico. He was a prolific writer who extensively documented the atrocities committed by the Spaniards from first and second hand accounts. He went regularly to Spain to lobby against the *encomienda*. Till this day he is regarded by many Eurocentric scholars as a "defender of Indians", although no "Indian" ever asked him to defend them.

Both Las Casas and Sepúlveda were from the Dominican Order. The debate was not in the format we know today: two persons who exchange arguments in the same venue. The debate consisted of two presentations given to *Junta* without the other opponent being present. The debate was in Latin, the common language for theological works. Sepúlveda had written a treatise titled "*On the just causes of the war with the Indians*". Las Casas had read it and wrote an extensive response titled *In defense of the Indians*. They presented their work before the *Junta* in mid-August 1550.

Sepúlveda began with a three hour presentation in which he read his booklet. The next day Las Casas came and for five days he read the complete text of the book he had written in response to Sepúlveda. There was no back and forth.

Many books and articles have been written about the debate of Valladolid. I based my analysis on two main sources. An English summary of the text by Sepúlveda and an English translation of the whole text of Las Casas in which he also summarizes the propositions of Sepúlveda to which he responds.¹⁹⁵ The summaries of Las Casas are important, because although I have not seen a full English translation of the text of

Sepúlveda, the debate can be understood through the reaction of Las Casas to each of the arguments of Sepúlveda.

4.2.3.2 *The questions*

The central question in the debate was: *"Is it lawful for the King of Spain to wage war on the Indians, before preaching the faith to them, in order to subject them to his rule, so that afterward they may be more easily instructed in the faith?"*¹⁹⁶

In fact, there were two questions entailed in the sentence. *"Is it lawful for the King of Spain to wage war on the Indians"* and *"Should the Indigenous people be Christianized by force?"*. Furthermore, the questions had a theoretical and empirical dimension. The theoretical dimension concerns the questions *"What is a just war?"* and *"What is the essence of Christianity?"* The empirical dimension concerns the questions *"What kind of societies were the indigenous societies?"* and *"How did the Spaniards colonize the Americas?"*

For the theoretical question both contenders relied heavily on the Bible, the laws and regulations of the Church (the canon), the authority of important theologians, notable Saint Augustine (354-430) and Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), and the Greek philosopher from antiquity Aristotle (384-322 BCE). Aristotle was born before Jesus Christ and was not a Christian. And although he was *"ignorant of Christian truth and love"* as Las Casas puts it, he was regarded as an important philosopher of ethics and metaphysics in Christian theology. Las Casas cited Thomas Aquinas twice as often as any other authority. Second to him is Saint Augustine followed by Aristotle. In his text Las Casas often refers to Aristotle as the *"Philosopher"*.

The authority of knowledge in that period is Christian theology. Las Casas makes this explicit, when he writes about the book of Sepúlveda: *"Everything in his little work, says Sepúlveda, is proven most thoroughly by various citations from the sacred books of the Old and New Testaments, from natural law, and also from the authority of theologians who teach that when war is just ... soldiers are not bound to make restitution of things acquired by right of war."*¹⁹⁷

For the empirical questions Sepúlveda relies on the account of Oviedo, while Las Casas brings his own experience in the Americas to the table.

4.2.3.3 *The propositions of Sepúlveda*

Sepúlveda's argument starts with the distinction between superior and inferior human beings. He refers to Aristotle for this distinction. He writes: *"The man rules over the woman, the adult over the child, the father over his children. That is to say, the most powerful and most perfect rule over the weakest and most imperfect. This same relationship exists among men, there being some who by nature are masters and others who by nature are slaves. Those who surpass the rest in prudence and intelligence, although not in physical strength, are by nature the masters. On the other hand, those who are dim-witted and mentally lazy, although they may be physically strong enough to fulfil all the necessary tasks, are by nature slaves. It is just and useful that it be this way."*¹⁹⁸

The source of the distinction between inferior and superior human beings is nature. That is how the world is. It is not a matter of people making this distinction rightfully or wrongfully. It is a matter of the law of nature.

Sepúlveda seeks confirmation in the Bible: *"We even see it sanctioned in divine law itself, for it is written in the Book of Proverbs: 'He who is stupid will serve the wise man.' And so it is with the barbarous and inhumane peoples [the Indigenous people] who have no civil life and peaceful customs. It will always be just and in conformity with natural law that such people submit to the rule of more cultured and humane princes and nations. Thanks to their virtues and the practical wisdom of their laws, the latter can destroy barbarism and educate these [inferior] people to a more humane and virtuous life. And if*

the latter reject such rule, it can be imposed upon them by force of arms. Such a war will be just according to natural law."¹⁹⁹

So the Bible confirms Aristotle. There are wise and stupid men, and the stupid should serve the wise. Two theologians confirm this: *"One may believe as certain and undeniable, since it is affirmed by the wisest authors, that it is just and natural that prudent, upright, and humane men should rule over those who are not. On this basis the Romans established their legitimate and just rule over many nations, according to St. Augustine in several passages of his work, The City of God, which St. Thomas [Aquinas] collected and cited in his work, De regimine principum.*"²⁰⁰

With these authorities supporting him, Sepúlveda then moves to argue that the Spaniards are the superior men: *"You do not expect me to make a lengthy commemoration of the judgment and talent of the Spaniard."*²⁰¹ It should be obvious to everybody. Then he continues: *"Who can ignore the ... virtues of our people, their fortitude, their humanity, their love of justice and religion? I speak only of our princes and those who by their energy and industriousness have shown that they are worthy of administering the commonwealth. I refer in general terms only to those Spaniards who have received a liberal education. If some of them are wicked and unjust, that is no reason to denigrate the glory of their race, which should be judged by the actions of its cultivated and noble men and by its customs and public institutions, rather than by the actions of depraved persons who are similar to slaves... How deeply rooted is the Christian religion in the souls of the Spaniards, even among those who live amidst the tumult of battle! I have observed many outstanding examples."*²⁰²

By "race" he does not mean the biological characteristics of the Spaniard but the religious ones. The superior men are superior because they have the right religion on which their culture and qualities are based. He goes on to compare the Spaniards with the Indigenous people: *"Now compare these natural qualities of judgment, talent, magnanimity, temperance, humanity, and religion with those of these pitiful men [the Indigenous people], in whom you will scarcely find any vestiges of humanness. These people possess neither science nor even an alphabet, nor do they preserve any monuments of their history except for some obscure and vague reminiscences depicted in certain paintings, nor do they have written laws, but barbarous institutions and customs. In regard to their virtues, how much restraint or gentleness are you to expect of men who are devoted to all kinds of intemperate acts and abominable lewdness, including the eating of human flesh? And you must realize that prior to the arrival of the Christians, they did not live in that peaceful kingdom of Saturn that the poets imagine, but on the contrary they made war against one another continually and fiercely, with such fury that victory was of no meaning if they did not satiate their monstrous hunger with the flesh of their enemies.... These Indians are so cowardly and timid that they could scarcely resist the mere presence of our soldiers. Many times thousands upon thousands of them scattered, fleeing like women before a very few Spaniards, who amounted to fewer than a hundred."*²⁰³

Sepúlveda is well aware of the highly developed civilizations of the Aztecs in Central and South America. He needs to downgrade their culture in order to maintain that they are inferior. This is how he argues: *"In regard to those [of the Aztec and other Indigenous civilizations] who inhabit New Spain and the province of Mexico, I have already said that they consider themselves the most civilized people. They boast of their political and social institutions, because they have rationally planned cities and nonhereditary kings who are elected by popular suffrage, and they carry on commerce among themselves in the manner of civilized people. But...I dissent from such an opinion."*²⁰⁴

Sepúlveda observes that the Aztecs had a democratic system where leadership is not hereditary, but elected. He sees that as a characteristic of barbarism because the hereditary kingdom of Spain was his standard: *"In those same institutions there is proof of the coarseness, barbarism, and innate servility of these men. Natural necessity encourages the building of houses, some rational manner of life, and some sort of*

commerce. Such an argument merely proves that they are neither bears nor monkeys and that they are not totally irrational."²⁰⁵

Another sign of barbarism is the system of social distribution of goods and services and the lack of private ownership: "They have established their commonwealth in such a manner that no one individually owns anything, neither a house nor a field that one may dispose of or leave to his heirs in his will, because everything is controlled by their lords, who are incorrectly called kings. They live more at the mercy of their king's will than of their own. They are the slaves of his will and caprice, and they are not the masters of their fate. The fact that this condition is not the result of coercion but is voluntary and spontaneous is a certain sign of the servile and base spirit of these barbarians. They had distributed their fields and farms in such a way that one third belonged to the king, another third belonged to the religious cult, and only a third part was reserved for the benefit of everyone; but all of this they did in such a way that they themselves cultivated the royal and religious lands... And if this kind of servitude and barbaric commonwealth had not been suitable to their temperament and nature, it would have been easy for them to take advantage of the death of a king, since the monarchy was not hereditary, in order to establish a state that was freer and more favorable to their interests. Their failure to do so confirms that they were born for servitude and not the civil and liberal life.... Such are, in short, the character and customs of these barbarous, uncultivated, and inhumane little men. We know that they were thus before the coming of the Spaniards."²⁰⁶

Then there is the question of human sacrifice and cannibalism: "Until now we have not mentioned their impious religion and their abominable sacrifices, in which they worship the Devil as God, to whom they thought of offering no better tribute than human hearts.... Interpreting their religion in an ignorant and barbarous manner, they sacrificed victims by removing the hearts from the chests. They placed these hearts on their abominable alters. With this ritual they believed that they had appeased their gods. They also ate the flesh of the sacrificed men.... How are we to doubt that these people, so uncultivated, so barbarous, and so contaminated with such impiety and lewdness, have not been justly conquered by so excellent, pious, and supremely just a king as Ferdinand the Catholic was and the Emperor Charles now is, the kings of a most humane and excellent nation rich in all varieties of virtue?"²⁰⁷

He concludes: "War against these barbarians can be justified not only on the basis of their paganism but even more so because of their abominable licentiousness, their prodigious sacrifice of human victims, the extreme harm that they inflicted on innocent persons, their horrible banquets of human flesh, and the impious cult of their idols... Their purpose is not so much to punish as to correct evils. What is more appropriate and beneficial for these barbarians than to become subject to the rule of those whose wisdom, virtue, and religion have converted them from barbarians into civilized men (insofar as they are capable of becoming so), from being torpid and licentious to becoming upright and moral, from being impious servants of the Devil to becoming believers in the true God?"²⁰⁸

The treatise of Sepúlveda can be summarized in four premises. I will present these premises and the way Las Casas has summarized them in order to answer them:

1. The indigenous people are barbarians and inferior to the Spaniards. Therefore a war against them is justified, because inferior people should be ruled by superior people.

Las Casas's summary: "He argues first that those people are barbaric, uninstructed in letters and the art of government, and completely ignorant, unreasoning, and totally incapable of learning anything but the mechanical arts, that they are sunk in vice, are cruel, and are of such character that, as nature teaches, they are to be governed by the will of others. This, at various times, many reliable men who have [known] them and lived in close association with them have asserted under oath... The conclusion drawn from this is that the Indians are obliged by the natural law to obey those who are outstanding in virtue and character in the same way that matter yields to form,

body to soul, sense to reason, animals to human beings, women to men, children to adults, and finally the imperfect to the more perfect, the worse to the better, the cheaper to the more precious and excellent, to the advantage of both. This is the natural order, which the eternal and divine law commands be observed, according to Augustine. Therefore, if the Indians, once warned, refuse to obey this legitimate sovereignty, they can be forced to do so for their own welfare by recourse to the terrors of war. And this war will be just both by civil and natural law ... as well as of nature and nature's law."²⁰⁹

2. The indigenous people commit crimes against natural law: idolatry and sacrifice of humans to their god.

Las Casas's summary: "*Sepúlveda proves that the Indians, even though unwilling, must accept the Spanish yoke so that they may be corrected and be punished for the sins and crimes against the divine and natural laws by which they have been contaminated, especially their idolatry and their impious custom of human sacrifice. ... Further, it is the more common opinion among all the doctors that pagans who do not observe the natural law may be punished by Christians.*"²¹⁰

3. The indigenous people oppress and kill innocent people.

Las Casas's summary: "*Sepúlveda argues that the injuries and extreme misery which the Indians used to inflict and which those who have not yet been subdued still inflict today on a great number of innocent persons, whom they used to sacrifice each year to the evil spirit, should be stopped... The above-mentioned evil, however, cannot be avoided unless the barbarians are tamed and subjugated.*"²¹¹

4. War may be waged against infidels in order to prepare the way for preaching the Faith.

Las Casas's summary: "*He advances the gain in bringing about the spread and growth of the Christian religion. This will be accomplished if, once those regions have been brought under control, the gospel of Christ can be preached by consecrated men safely and without any danger, so that they will not be massacred by either [pagan] rulers or priests, as they have already done three or four times. This he shows in the parable of the banquet to which the first persons were invited, whereas the rest were compelled and forced.*"²¹²

Sepúlveda had a clear answer to the central question of the debate. Yes, it is lawful for the King of Spain to wage war on the Indigenous people, because they are barbarians. Yes, force can be used to convert pagans to Christianity. The rationale for both answers is that superior people (Spanish Christians) can subdue inferior people because it is a law of nature.

4.2.3.4 The response of Las Casas

Las Casas had to answer both the theoretical aspects of these arguments and the observations regarding the Indigenous culture that Oviedo had been reporting about.

On the empirical level he questioned the reliability of Oviedo, whose book on the history of the Spanish invasion was formally approved by the *Council of the Indies*: "*Do you quote to us Oviedo's History, which bears the approval of the Royal Council, as though Oviedo, as he himself testifies, was not a despotic master, who kept unfortunate Indians oppressed by slavery like cattle and, in imitation of other thieves, ruined a great part of the continent, or as though the Council, when it approves a book, appears to approve also all the lies it contains, or as if, when the Council approves a book, it knows whether its contents are true?... From this it is clear that the basis for Sepúlveda's teaching that these people are uncivilized and ignorant is worse than false.*"²¹³

Oviedo spoke from the position of the *encomienderos* and cannot be regarded as a reliable source of information on the Indigenous people, despite the approval of the Council. Las Casas: "*It is not surprising that Oviedo reviles the Indians with so many*

slandorous lies, and there are two reasons for this. The first is that he was one of those looters who went to the mainland in 1513 at the time of Pedrarias [Dávila]. They, before anyone else, began at the province of Darién, which stretches to the gulf of Urabá, and laid waste to the whole mainland with complete inhuman savagery. They spared neither women, children, or the aged, and even burned men alive so that they might steal their gold, divide the other men among themselves, that is, enslaved them... Oviedo should try to make reparation by offering restitution for these detestable obscenities, rather than by his accusing slanders and shameless lies defame a gentle and decent people."²¹⁴

Not only is he unreliable, he should pay reparations for his crimes!

Las Casas took the propositions of Sepúlveda point by point.

1. The proposition on barbarism.

He starts with the theoretical question: What is a barbarian? He explains that according to the Aristotle and theologians there are four kinds of barbarians: *"First, barbarian in the loose and broad sense of the word means any cruel, inhuman, wild, and merciless man acting against human reason out of anger or native disposition, so that, putting aside decency, meekness, and human moderation, he becomes hard, severe, quarrelsome, unbearable, cruel, and plunges blindly into crimes that only the wildest beasts of the forest would commit."*²¹⁵

*"The second kind of barbarian includes those who do not have a written language that corresponds to the spoken one, as the Latin language does with ours, and therefore they do not know how to express in it what they means. For this reason they are considered to be uncultured and ignorant of letters and learning... It is obvious that a people can be called barbarians and still be wise, courageous, prudent, and lead a settled life."*²¹⁶

*"The third kind of barbarian, in the proper and strict meaning of the word, are those who, either because of their evil and wicked character or the barrenness of the region in which they live, are cruel, savage, scottish, stupid, and strangers to reason. They are not governed by law or right, do not cultivate friendships, and have no state or political organised community. Rather, they are without ruler, laws, and institutions. They do not contract marriage according to any set forms and, finally, they do not engage in civilized commerce. They do not buy, they do not sell, they do not hire, they do not lease, they do not make contracts, they do not deposit, they do not borrow, they do not lend. Finally, they enter into none of the contracts regulated by the law of the nations. Indeed, they live spread out and scattered, dwelling in the forests and in the mountains, being content with their mates only, just as do animals, both domestic and wild. These are barbarians in the absolute and strict sense of the word."*²¹⁷

*"There is a fourth kind of barbarian, which includes all those who do not acknowledge Christ. For no matter how well governed a people may be or how philosophical a man, they are subject to complete barbarism, specifically, the barbarism of vice, if they are not imbued with the mysteries of Christian philosophy."*²¹⁸

In theory, barbarism is not linked to a certain type of people (Christians, non-believers). Indigenous non-believers can be civilized and Christians can be barbarians.

He presents the empirical evidence: *"The Indian race is not that barbaric... They have been endowed with excellent conduct, and before the coming of the Spaniards... they had political states that were well founded on beneficial laws... Furthermore, they are so skilled in every mechanical art that with every right they should be set ahead of all the nations of the known world on this score, so very beautiful in their skill and artistry are the things this people produces in the grace of their architecture, its painting, and its needlework. But Sepúlveda despises these mechanical arts, as if these things do not reflect inventiveness, ingenuity, industry, and right reason... So these men are not stupid, Reverend Doctor."*²¹⁹

"In the liberal arts that they have been taught up to now, such as grammar and logic, they are remarkably adept. With every kind of music they charm the ears of their

audience with wonderful sweetness. They write skilfully and quite elegantly, so that most often we are at a loss to know whether the characters are handwritten or printed. I shall explain this at greater length in the second part of this *Defense*, not by quoting the totally groundless lies of the worst [deceivers] in the histories published so far but the truth itself and what I have seen with my eyes, felt with my hands, and heard with my own ears while living a great many years among those people.^{"220}

As far as the first three criteria concerned, the Indigenous people cannot be labelled as barbarians. On the fourth criterion (accepting the Christian faith) the Indigenous people would not score well. But that could be changed easily: *"It was not altogether difficult for Cortés to lead a gifted and teachable people, once they had abandoned their superstitious idolatry, to the worship of Christ. For they learn our writings with pleasure and with admiration, now that they have given up their hieroglyphics by which they used to record their annals, enshrining for posterity in various symbols the memory of their kings."*²²¹

Then he turns to the Spaniards. They can also be barbarians, although they are Christians. Referring to Aristotle as "the Philosopher" he says: *"Therefore, although the Philosopher, who was ignorant of Christian truth and love, writes that the wise may hunt down barbarians in the same way as they would wild animals, let no one conclude from this that barbarians are to be killed or loaded like beasts of burden with excessive, cruel, hard, and harsh labour and that, for this purpose, they can be hunted and captured by wiser men. Good-bye, Aristotle! From Christ, the eternal truth, we have the command 'You must love your neighbour as yourself'... He who wants a large part of mankind to be such that, following Aristotle's teachings, he may act like a ferocious executioner toward them, press them into slavery, and through them grow rich, is a despotic master, not a Christian; a son of Satan, not of God; a plunderer, not a shepherd; a person who is led by spirit of the devil, not of heaven. If you seek Indians so gently, mildly, quietly, humanely, and in a Christian manner you may instruct them in the word of God and by your labour bring them to Christ's flock, imprinting the gentle Christ on their minds, you perform the work of an apostle and will receive an imperishable crown of glory from our sacred lamb. But if it be in order that by sword, fire, massacre, trickery, violence, tyranny, cruelty, and an inhumanity that is worse than barbaric you may destroy and plunder utterly harmless peoples who are ready to renounce evil and receive the word of God, you are children of the devil and the most horrific plunderers of all."*²²²

He concludes: *"The Spaniards who have maltreated the Indians - harmless people who are far gentler than all others - with so many horrible defeats, so many massacres, and evil worse than hell itself are barbarians and worse than barbarians."*²²³

2. The proposition on the crime of idolatry, sacrifice of humans and eating of human flesh

Las Casas provides four arguments against this proposition.

First, an argument from the canon: *"Let us speak about the unbelievers who live in kingdoms ruled by non-Christians, such as the Moors of Africa, the Turks, the Scythians, the Persians, and those with whom the present controversy is concerned, the Indians. Surely, no matter how despicable the crimes they commit against God, or even against religion among themselves or within their territories, neither the Church nor Christian rulers can take cognizance of them or punish them for these. For there is no jurisdiction, which is the necessary basis for all juridical acts, especially for punishing a person."*²²⁴ It is a matter of jurisdiction. Christians don't have jurisdiction over people who don't live in their territory. So there is no legal base to wage war against them. There is no legal basis in the canon of the Church that enables Christians from Spain to go the Americas to wage war. They have no jurisdiction there.

Second, if unbelievers commit crimes of idolatry and sacrifice of humans God is the only one that has the power to pass the final judgment: *"However, as regards the exercise of this power granted to Christ and on his behalf: as a merciful lord he waits until the day of each person's death or the day of judgement, when he will reward or punish each person according to the person's works, and he will carry out his will concerning all things."*²²⁵

Third, the crime of human sacrifice might actually not be a crime. Las Casas develops this argument in a systematic way: *"By natural law, men are obliged to honour God by the best means available and to offer the best things in sacrifice."*²²⁶ Why are men obliged to sacrifice? Las Casas: *"Every man, no matter how innocent he may be, owes God more than his life; and so, although [men] do not will it by an explicit act, yet they perform an act that is owed, since all men are obliged to give their blood and their life whenever God's honour demands it. We Christians, like all those who knew God during the early centuries, are obliged by divine law to do this."*²²⁷

Christian have the obligations to sacrifice to God to thank Him for all the good he does. The sacrifice is an expression of gratitude. But the magnitude of God's goodness is so great, you cannot give him a small token of gratefulness: *"Since we cannot give adequate thanks for so many favours, we are obliged to present what seems to us be the greatest and most valuable good."*²²⁸

What is the greatest symbol of gratitude? Las Casas: *"According to human judgement and truth, nothing in nature is greater or more valuable than the life of man or man himself... By offering a supremely precious thing they might be more grateful for the many favours they have received... Since we cannot give adequate thanks for so many favours, we are obliged to present what seems to us be the greatest and most valuable good, that is, human life."*²²⁹

To put it in another way: *"Since all creatures are from God, and since God is the good of the whole universe, it follows that, with a love implanted by nature, every creature loves God more than itself, and consequently that it should expose its life to death for the defense of the glory of God. From whom it has whatever welfare it has."*²³⁰

So there is an argument in Christian theology against the proposition that *"sacrificing men to God is unnatural"*.²³¹ In fact, *"It can be persuasively argued, from the fact that God commanded Abraham to sacrifice to him his only son Isaac, that it not altogether detestable to sacrifice human beings to God... God the Father offered his only son Jesus as a sacrifice to death for the salvation of men."*²³²

Unbelievers also know the concept of sacrifice: *"According to the Philosopher, any outstanding citizen is obliged to give his life for the welfare of the state."*²³³ Aristotle explains that an individual can sacrifice his/her life for the welfare of the state. In a similar way unbelievers can logically put an argument for human sacrifice: *"For the pagans thought that through sacrifices of this type they could divert evils from their state and gain good will and prosperity for their kingdoms. Therefore whoever sacrifices men to God can be drawn to this action by natural reason, especially if he lacks Christian faith and instruction."*²³⁴

He goes into the empirical evidence of human sacrifice by the indigenous people: *"In those provinces where unbelievers eat human flesh and sacrifice innocent persons, only a few persons commit these crimes, whereas innumerable persons are not guilty of them, and moreover do not participate in these acts anyway."*²³⁵ Human sacrifice occurs on a small scale, so it should not be blown out of proportion.

Fourth, the eating of human flesh might not be a crime. Las Casas: *"The eating of human flesh, which is called a wild and bestial act by Aristotle is against the natural law for two reasons: (1) if innocent people are killed so that their flesh may be eaten and (2) because eating human flesh is so savage that even beasts that eat the carcasses of their own kind are rare indeed. When, however, human flesh is eaten out of necessity and innocent people are not killed, but the corpses are of people already dead or of criminals, then surely it is not against the natural law, and no sin is committed."*²³⁶ He cites St. Augustine to support his point.

He brings empirical evidence to sustain his theory: *"There is a story of some Spaniards who once ate the liver of a dead companion. Returning to the island of Cuba from the recent discovered Yuacatán, they left their ships and, without any food, went toward the mountains. One of them, named Biver, whom I knew very well, died of hunger, and his*

companions, hoping to avoid the same fate, ate his liver. The same thing happened in the famous Spanish city of Numancia. Its citizens, oppressed by extreme hunger during a siege by Scipio, ate human corpses."²³⁷

There is no evidence of cannibalism on a large scale among the Indigenous people. First you have to establish the reasons of cannibalism: *"Suppose, then, the unbelievers were to maintain that they eat only people of this kind, that is, those who have died or who have been legally condemned to death, but do not kill the innocent, when the matter can be fully known, especially if the ruler, whose word is in law presumed to be true. Would it not be unjust to wage war on them before the matter is certainly and fully understood?"*²³⁸

If cannibalism would have taken place on a large scale, the demographic and political effects would have been enormous because of perpetual civil war: *"That practice is not that common among all the Indian peoples. And if it is, no great number of persons were killed. Otherwise all would have been totally destroyed before this. And yet we find that all the regions are densely populated."*²³⁹

3. The proposition on the oppression and killing of innocent people

Las Casas presents four counterarguments.

First, *"In human law ... a benefit is not conferred on a person against his will."*²⁴⁰ The Spaniards should have asked the Indigenous people if they want their help to fight oppression and the killing of innocent people. They might refuse it, because of the second argument.

Second, *"To prevent the death of a few innocent persons we should not move against an immense multitude of persons including the innocent."*²⁴¹ Saving a few innocent people by killing many innocent people does not make sense.

Third, saving a few innocent people *"and destroy whole kingdoms, ... implant[s] a hatred for the Christian religion in their souls, so that they will never want to hear the name or teaching in Christ for all eternity."*²⁴² Spreading the gospel is an aim of the Spanish invasion of the Americas and this is obstructed by these practices.

Fourth, God is the ultimate judge, not the Spaniards. *"In order that these innocent people may not be harmed, the Lord forbids the uprooting of evil men and puts off their punishment until the day of judgement."*²⁴³

4. The proposition on war against infidels in order to prepare the way for preaching the Faith

Here Las Casas brings five arguments.

He starts with expressing his astonishment at the argument: *"At this point we shall refute Sepúlveda's fourth argument or cause [for war], in which he says that war can be waged against the Indians so that, once the path has been totally cleared for the preachers of the gospel, the Christian religion may be spread. Indeed, I cannot cease to be astonished by Sepúlveda. For what spirit leads a theologian, mature and well versed in humane letters, to set these poisons before the world so that the far-flung Indian empires, contrary to the law of Christ, would be prey for many savage thieves?"*²⁴⁴

His first argument is that the proper method of conversation in Christianity is not force as Sepúlveda argued. Referring to Saint Thomas on how Jesus worked, he says: *"His purpose was to invite and attract those people gently, by inspiration and illumination, as well as by infusing them with wisdom and divine love."*²⁴⁵

Another way of conversion was to convince potential converts by his miracles: *"The very way in which Christ was drawing believers to knowledge of himself was miraculous."*²⁴⁶ And there are quite a few miracles in Christianity mentioned in the Bible. Jesus was born to a virgin, changed water into wine, healed the sick, brought dead person back to life, drove out demons, made blind men see again and let crippled people walk, healed lepers,

fed 5,000 families with loaves and fish that he multiplied, and ascended into heaven 40 days after he had been resurrected.²⁴⁷

Telling potential converts about these miracles will bring them to Christ.

His second argument is that *"in human law ... a benefit is not conferred on a person against his will."*²⁴⁸ Conversion to Christianity is a benefit for the converts, but that benefit cannot be bestowed upon them if they don't want it.

Third, the combination of force and preaching the gospel is ineffective: *"With what swords and cannons did Christ arm his disciples when he sent them to preach the gospel? Let us listen as our Lord commands the Apostles and says: 'And as you go, proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is close at hand. Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils. You received without charge, give without charge.' As for our preachers, however, surrounded by a troop of soldiers, or rather thieves, in what tone of speech will they tell the Indians: 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'? They should say instead: 'The kingdom of hell is at hand, both for us, who will kill you and plunder your homes, and for you, too, who will breathe forth your lives without faith and the grace of sacraments.'"*²⁴⁹

Fourth, the combination of theft of gold, rape, violence and preaching the gospel gives a false message about Christianity to the Indigenous people: *"Now in waging war on the Indians under the pretext of spreading religion will the Spaniards give away their money, or will they instead steal and rob others by violence? Then will not the Indians, when they see the Christians greedily hunting for gold and diligently collecting small bits of it from the broken idols, saving it, and falling just short of adoring it, will they not surely think that gold is the god of the Christians, which we know they have often believed? Moreover, will the belligerents meanwhile be so chaste, so continent, and temperate that they will not violate other men's wives? Will they not rape their daughters? ... Will they not reasonably judge that whatever the preachers of the faith proclaim to them about the faith, about religion, and about Christ himself is nonsense or contrived lies?"*²⁵⁰

*"How does it agree with the example of Christ to spear unknowing Indians before the gospel is preached to them and to terrify in the extreme a totally innocent people by a display of arrogance and the fury of war, or to drive them to death or flight?"*²⁵¹

These are not methods of Christians but of Muslims, according to Las Casas: *"Leading to faith by massacre and terror is Mohammedan, since Mohammed said that he was sent in the terror of the sword and the violence of weapons, according to Vincent... Why, then, Sepúlveda, can you want Christ's law to be propagated not by Christian but by Mohammedan means?"*²⁵²

Fifth, experience shows that force is not needed with the Indigenous people. They are eager to convert to Christianity once the message is brought in a correct way: *"The Indians are very meek, and when the Spaniards first penetrated their territories an enormous number of them quickly boarded the ships of the Christians with a sincere attitude and [later], entertaining the Spaniards in their homes, they paid them the highest honour as godlike men sent from heaven. From this it is quite clear that they would receive and all but worship the preachers if they would bring them the example of Christ and the Apostles in their behaviour and would be such as the heralds of the gospel truth ought to be."*²⁵³

There is only one reason to use force in the conversion of the Indigenous people: *"The Church can justifiably wage war only against those unbelievers who would maliciously prevent the spread of a faith, either by trying to make those who had already received it abandon it or by placing obstacles in the way of those who, in all probability, would come to believe."*²⁵⁴

Conclusion

Las Casas also had a clear answer to the central question of the debate. No, it is not lawful for the King of Spain to wage war on the Indigenous people. No, force cannot be used to convert pagans to Christianity.

All the theoretical arguments are based on theological sources. Where empirical evidence is put forward, Sepúlveda relies on Ovieda and Las Casas bring his own experience to the table.

The criterion for superiority and inferiority is based on the notion of adhering to the right religion. Both Sepúlveda and Las Casas agreed on Christianity as one of the criteria for belonging to an inferior species, the barbarians.

4.2.4 The aftermath of the debate

4.2.4.1 *The policy*

After the debate the Junta asked one of their members, the Dominican Domingo de Soto, to prepare a summary of the cases. Sepúlveda wanted to reply to Las Casas. A second debate took place in April or May 1551 but few records were kept of it. Sepúlveda came with twelve points of critique. Las Casas answered his objections. There was no further discussion.²⁵⁵

Soto prepared his summary which was accepted by both theologians. But no decision was reached by the Junta. Seven years later the junta was still trying to obtain the individual opinions of the judges. Both Las Casas and Sepúlveda claimed victory. The New Laws were not invoked as Sepúlveda wanted. On the other hand, the concept of Las Casas concept of peaceful Christian colonization proved to be an illusion.

Spanish colonization began in the Caribbean with the larger island such as Ayiti, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Jamaica. The Spaniards committed a horrible genocide, which led to a sharp decline of the Indigenous population.

The encomenderos asked and got permission from the crown to raid the smaller island and kidnap the total population for forced labour on the bigger islands. Many islands were depopulated by systematic kidnapping.

The Spaniards saw two avenues for sustaining colonization: the extension of colonization to the rest of the Americas and the kidnapping and enslavement of Africans.

The extension of the colonization of the rest of the Americas resulted in another genocide. A study on the demography of the Indigenous population before and after 1492 showed that colonization led to a decline of the population from over 72 million in 1492 to 4 million a few centuries later.²⁵⁶ The study concludes: *"There are overwhelming indications that the peoples of North America and the entire Western Hemisphere were remarkably free of serious diseases before the Europeans and Africans arrived."*²⁵⁷

Colonization brought violence, genocide, mass infection and the sacrifice of millions of human beings for greed. The debate of Valladolid had no bearing on this result.

The other avenue for sustaining colonization was the kidnapping and enslavement of Africans. As early as 1444 the Portuguese had kidnapped Africans in Africa to work in Portugal. Spanish enslavers brought kidnapped Africans to Seville. They had experience with kidnapping and enslavement of Africans. Some were taken to the Caribbean to work on the small sugar plantations.

In 1517 some settlers asked the Spanish king for license for the trade in enslaved Africans. They used the argument of relieving the burden on the Indigenous population. L. Clayton explains: *"Las Casas picked up on the idea, and, back in Spain in 1517 – 1519, he suggested to young King Charles' s counsellors that a license be issued to import Negro slaves directly from Spain or Africa to the islands."*²⁵⁸ He later regretted the advice.

4.2.4.2 *The Indigenous response*

*"Ultimately," writes D. Castro, "Valladolid was little more than a confrontation between two faces of the same empire. One belonged to the colonists and was represented by Sepúlveda; it demanded a free hand in the exploitation of Spanish territories and its people as the colonists saw fit. The other was represented by Las Casas, who advocated a more benevolent and systematic exploitation while positioning the crown as the overriding regulator of the exploitation of the colonies and their people in a rational and productive manner."*²⁵⁹

Las Casas is painted by many European historians and their followers in the colonized world as the white saviour of the Indigenous people. But his perspective is not of the oppressed, but of the oppressor who wanted a Christian empire. Las Casas suggested to the king that he send forty farmers with their wives and children to each village and city of Ayiti and have five Tainos assigned to each farmer. The Spaniards would then teach the Tainos how to farm and to make the land productive. He called upon the Tainos to wear European cloth and to learn to eat sitting at the table instead of on the "ground like dogs".²⁶⁰

During his 40-year stay he hardly had personal contact with the Indigenous people. He never learned one of their languages and relied on the services of interpreters.

No Indigenous people ever asked Las Casas to defend them. Nor did Las Casas even bother to ask them what they thought of his arguments to Christianize them. For the Indigenous people Christianity was not a superior religion, but a religion of hate, oppression, exploitation, rape, violence and genocide.

A different concept of Christianity was articulated by a Taino chief, named Hatuey. He had experienced the horrors of Christianity in his island of birth Ayiti. Hatuey had gathered 400 men, women and children to travel by canoe to the nearby island of Cuba. He wanted to warn the Taino people of Cuba of the danger posed by the Christians and called upon them to join forces to combat the Spaniards. He showed them a basket full of gold and jewels: *"Here is the God the Spaniards worship, for these they fight and kill; for these they persecute us and that is why we have to throw them into the sea...They tell us, these tyrants, that they adore a God of peace and equality, and yet they usurp our land and make us their slaves. They speak to us of an immortal soul and of their eternal rewards and punishments, and yet they rob our belongings, seduce our women, violate our daughters. Incapable of matching us in valor, these cowards cover themselves with iron that our weapons cannot break."*²⁶¹

For three months Hatuey conducted a guerrilla war against the Spanish barbarians. Finally he was captured and sentenced to be burnt alive. Before lighting the fire a priest tried to offer him spiritual comfort by showing him a cross and asking him to accept Jesus so he could go to heaven. Hatuey asked: *"Are there people like you in heaven?"* The priest answered: *"There are many like me in heaven."* Hatuey answered that he would rather go to hell than to be around Christians who committed the cruel atrocities he had experienced.

Hatuey's concept of Christianity was based on facts which he elaborated on:

1. Christianity is a bad religion that oppresses and exploits human beings.
2. Christianity is about greed and selfishness.
3. Christianity is based on hypocrisy.
4. Christianity should be opposed.

These were two fundamentally divergent views of Christianity in the early days of colonization in the Americas.

4.2.4.3 *The significance of the Valladolid debate*

The Valladolid debate is important, not because of its practical effects, but because it laid the theoretical foundation of basic racist concepts for the following five centuries.

These concepts changed in relation to changes in the authority of knowledge production. It was a change in form, not in substance. The theory, ethics, storyline and logic in the concepts stayed the same, but the terminology and the selection of observations changed.

The debate introduced the concept of superiority/inferiority in knowledge production about human relations. In theological racism the concept of superiority and inferiority is based on religion: Christians are superior to barbaric non-Christians. Sepúlveda argued superiority on the basis of natural laws: nature has divided human beings who are superior (Christians) while others are inferior. The most powerful and most perfect rule over the weakest and most imperfect, according to Sepúlveda. The idea of a natural law was kept in biological racism to argue the case of superiority and inferiority. People who are biologically inferior and superior are so because of natural laws. Cultural racism uses the idea of a social law that divides cultures in superior and inferior cultures. Cultures are inferior or superior because of social laws that determine how culture evolves from simple to complex. In all forms of racism there is the notion of a natural or social law that determines superiority and inferiority.

These laws are the basis of the ethics of racism, the idea that racism is justified and made right because of the law. It is right to consider Christianity as a superior religion because that is the law of nature. It is right to view whites as superior because it is a law of nature. It is right to believe that Western culture is superior because it is a law of social evolution.

Each form of racism draws on observations and a storyline that fits in the authority of knowledge production. In theological racism the storyline is based on arguments from Christian theology. In biological racism the storyline is based on arguments from the natural sciences (mainly biology). In cultural racism the storyline is based on arguments from the social sciences regarding the evolution of societies.

The debate also introduced the concept of a just war. Colonization is war. There was never a peaceful colonization where colonized people gave up their land without resistance, worked for free for other people or submitted to the rule of others in consent. There was always the same justification: the war is just. Spanish colonization was just because it was a war by civilized Christians against barbarians who are killing innocent people. The massive kidnapping and enslavement of Africans were acts of a just war in the progress of mankind in establishing modernity. In a similar line of reasoning the US war against Iraq was a just war, because a barbaric dictator was oppressing innocent people and the war is liberating them.

The concept of civilizing the colonized people was introduced in the Valladolid debate. The superior faith in theological racism is Christianity. Christianity should be spread because it is a superior religion. Colonization is necessary because it introduced modernity in the history of mankind. Modernity is the spread of science and Enlightenment across the world.

With colonization comes the white saviour. Las Casas is the ultimate example of the white saviour. He speaks for the colonized without feeling the need to consult with them. His arguments are not derived from the philosophy of the colonized. He seeks the good in the arguments and logic of the colonizer.

The debate also used the concept of universalizing Europe. The Spanish political and economic system was regarded as the only just and viable system. The democratic system that the Aztecs had developed in which leadership was not hereditary but elected was seen as barbaric. The lack of private ownership and the distribution of goods and services according to need is seen as a sign of backwardness. There is one standard of a just political and economic system and that is of the Spaniards. In the next century the concept of universalizing Europe was extensively applied in Eurocentric knowledge production.

4.3 Biological racism

4.3.1 The white Enlightenment

For 150 years European colonialism developed with Christian theology as its base of knowledge. Between 1650 and 1850 fundamental changes occurred in Europe. In chapter two I explained the struggle in knowledge production in Europe between Christian theology and science. Philosophers were at the forefront of that struggle. They articulated the need to develop knowledge production on the basis of observation and reasoning. They promoted the ideas of natural and social laws.

These concepts and methodology stood at the basis of the rise of the natural sciences in Europe. In 1628 William Harvey published his treatise in which he explained the role of the heart in the circulation of blood in the body. In 1662 Robert Boyle presented his thesis on chemistry that laid the foundations for this discipline. In 1687 Isaac Newton (1642-1726) published his *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* in which he explained the laws of mechanics and thus laid the foundation for a new physics. New devices were invented such as the steam engine (1699). Astronomy, chemistry and physics developed alongside life sciences such as biology. In 1735 Swedish biologist Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) published his *Systema Naturae* in which he outlined a comprehensive classification of animals. The advances in the natural sciences in Europe were made possible by philosophers who developed an epistemology that opened the road for experimental research.

In physics, astronomy and chemistry scientists had discovered natural laws. European philosophers argued that such laws existed in the biology of human beings. And they created an image of Africans that was thoroughly racist and would have the Nazi's look like amateurs. The most prominent and leading thinkers of European Enlightenment hold the most horrific views on black people that are currently common in right-wing extremist circles.

Charles de Montesquieu (1689-1755) who is known for his concept of the separation of powers in the legislative branch, judiciary branch and executive branch has this to say about Africans: *"Those concerned are black from head to toe, and they have such flat noses that it is almost impossible to feel sorry for them. One cannot get into one's mind that god, who is a very wise being, should have put a soul, above all a good soul, in a body that was entirely black... A proof that Negroes do not have common sense is that they make more of a glass necklace than of one of gold, which is of such great consequence among nations having a police. It is impossible for us to assume that these people are men because if we assumed they were men one would begin to believe that we ourselves were not Christians."*²⁶²

Voltaire (1694-1778) is regarded in France as the philosophical founder of French Enlightenment. He describes Africans as follows: *"Their round eyes, their flattened nose, their lips which are always large, their differently shaped ears, the wool of their head, that very measure of their intelligence, place prodigious differences between them and the other species of men... And they are not men, except in their stature, with the faculty of speech and thought at a degree far distant to ours. Such are the ones that I have seen and examined... And one could say that if their intelligence is not of another species than ours, then it is greatly inferior. They are not capable of paying much attention; they mingle very little, and they do not appear to be made either for the advantages or the abuses of our philosophy."*²⁶³

David Hume (1711-1776), a founder of the Scottish Enlightenment wrote: *"I am apt to suspect the negroes, and in general all the other species of men (for there are four or five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to the whites. There scarcely ever was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor even any individual eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences. On the other hand, the most rude and barbarous of the whites such as the ancient Germans, the present Tartars, have still something eminent about them, in their*

valour, form of government, or some other particular. Such a uniform and constant difference could not happen, in so many countries and ages, if nature had not made an original distinction between these breeds of men. Not to mention our colonies, there are negroe slaves dispersed all over Europe, of whom none ever discovered any symptoms of ingenuity; though low people, without education, will start up amongst us, and distinguish themselves in every profession. In Jamaica, indeed, they talk of one negroe as a man of parts and learning; but it is likely he is admired for slender."²⁶⁴

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), along with George Hegel, is one the giants of German Enlightenment. He states: *"The Negroes of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the ridiculous. Mr. Hume challenges anyone to adduce a single example where a Negro has demonstrated talents, and asserts that among the hundreds of thousands of blacks who have been transported elsewhere from their countries, although very many of them have been set free, nevertheless not a single one has ever been found who has accomplished something great in art or science or shown any other praiseworthy quality, while among the whites there are always those who rise up from the lowest rabble and through extraordinary gifts earn respect in the world. So essential is the difference between these two human kinds, and it seems to be just as great with regard to the capacities of mind as it is with respect to color.*"²⁶⁵

George Hegel (1770-1831) inspired Karl Marx with his philosophy of dialectics and word history. Hegel writes: *"The Negro, as already observed, exhibits the natural man in his completely wild and untamed state. We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality — all that we call feeling — if we would rightly comprehend him; there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character.*"²⁶⁶

We could go on and on with citations from leading figures in European intellectual circles, but those mentioned above are the founding fathers of European Enlightenment, which can be more accurately termed the White Enlightenment. They are not isolated figures, but were the authority of knowledge production in Europe.

The negative image of Africans as animals or biologically inferior people portrayed by the founders of the White Enlightenment stands in sharp contrast with the positive images of Africans in Europe before 1650. Black people lived in Africa before the rise of the trans-Atlantic enslavement. They were pictured in hundreds of paintings. Belgian painter Jan Mostaert (1475-1555) pictured a black man as a guest of the Queen of Austria around 1500. Another Belgian painter, Nicolaes Berchem (1622-1683) has a similar painting of an African prince visiting a European court in 1650. Italian painter Rafael Sanzio (1483-1520) painted three kings visiting the birth of Jesus Christ of which one of the kings is black. There are hundreds of these paintings in European art collections that give us an idea of how Africans were perceived before White Enlightenment and the trans-Atlantic enslavement. And the general image is that they were not seen as inferior creatures but as normal human beings.²⁶⁷

After 1650 fundamental changes occurred in the image of Africans by Europeans that are reflected in the views of their leading philosophers as explained above. A classification of human beings was made in which whites were invariable at the top. Carl Linnaeus distinguished between Europeans, American Indians, Asians, and Africans, whereby Europeans are described as *"acute, inventive, governed by laws"* and Africans as *"crafty, indolent, negligent, governed by caprice."*²⁶⁸ Charles Darwin (1809-1882) placed the Africans between the apes and the civilized race, meaning the whites: *"At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilised races of man will almost certainly exterminate, and replace, the savage races throughout the world. At the same time the anthropomorphous apes ... will no doubt be exterminated. The break between man and his nearest allies will then be wider, for it will intervene between man in a more civilised state, as we may hope, even than the Caucasian, and some ape as low as a baboon, instead of as now between the negro or Australian and the gorilla."*²⁶⁹

In the discipline of physical anthropology in the nineteenth century the study of size, shape and proportion of the human skull became a popular way of arguing that blacks

were inferior to whites because of the volume of the interior of the skull related to the capacity of the brain.

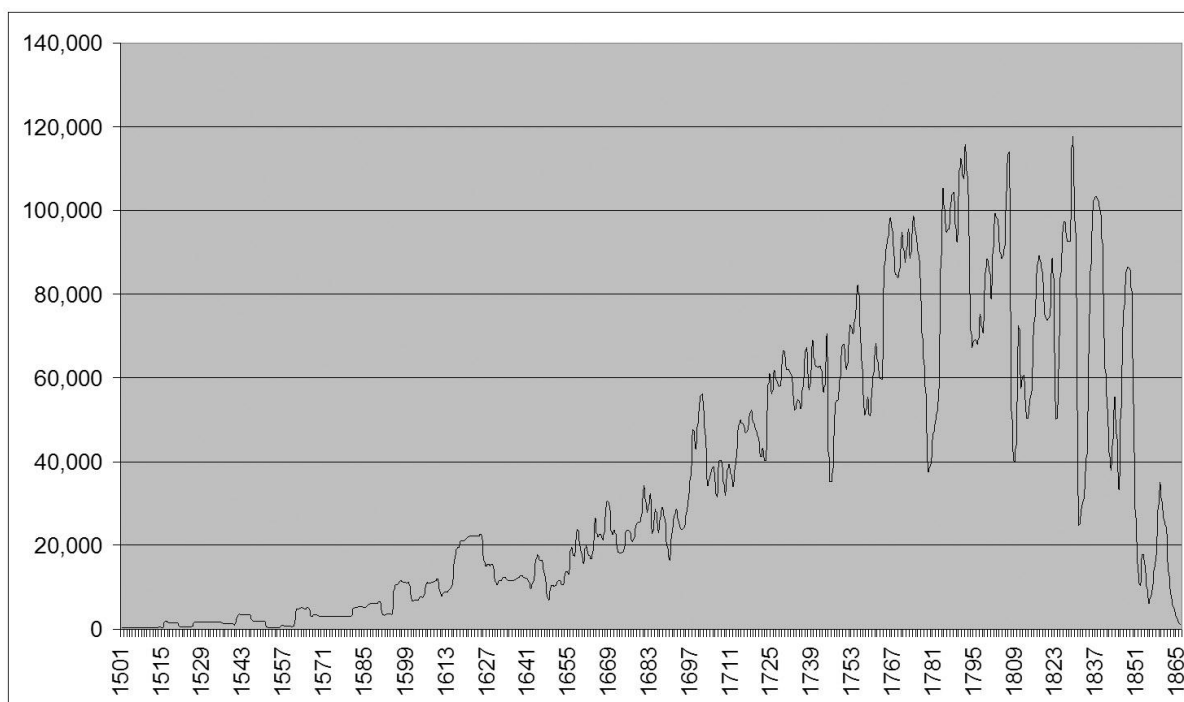
Count Arthur de Gobineau (1816-1882) has provided the most common perception in Europe of non-whites in his essay on the inequality of the races. He writes: *"The negroid variety is the lowest, and stands at the foot of the ladder. The animal character, that appears in the shape of the pelvis, is stamped on the negro from birth, and foreshadows his destiny. His intellect will always move within a very narrow circle.... The yellow man has little physical energy, and is inclined to apathy... He tends to mediocrity in everything ; he understands easily enough anything not too deep or sublime... He does not dream or theorize ; he invents little, but can appreciate and take over what is useful to him. His whole desire is to live in the easiest and most comfortable way possible. The yellow races are thus clearly superior to the black."*²⁷⁰

On the white race he says: *"These are gifted with reflective energy, or rather with an energetic intelligence... The white races are, further, distinguished by an extraordinary attachment to life... When they are cruel, they are conscious of their cruelty ; it is very doubtful whether such a consciousness exists in the negro... The principal motive is honour, which under various names has played an enormous part in the ideas of the race from the beginning."*²⁷¹

4.3.2 The relationship with the trans-Atlantic enslavement

The change of the view on blacks as respected human beings to animals or biologically inferior creatures is directly linked to the rise of the trans-Atlantic enslavement. Graph 1 shows the number of Africans who were kidnapped and embarked from Africa between 1501 and 1866. It shows how this industry of kidnapping and enslavement of blacks took off from the midst of the seventeenth century and reached its peak in the midst of the nineteenth century. This was the period when the White Enlightenment took off and developed in philosophy and the natural sciences. European intellectuals were justifying a crime against humanity with their theories of the biological inferiority of Africans and thus the image of blacks changed from human beings to animals.

Graph 1: Number of Africans kidnapped and embarked from Africa between 1501 and 1866



Source: the data from <http://www.slavevoyages.org/>

Trinidadian history Eric Williams was correct in pointing out: "*Slavery was not born of racism: rather, racism was the consequence of slavery.*"²⁷² Biological racism was the product of an era where the trans-Atlantic enslavement dominated colonialism and the authority of knowledge production shifted from theologians to philosophers and scientists in the natural sciences. The articulation of superiority and inferiority in human relations found its base in biology.

The trans-Atlantic enslavement had transformed human beings into cattle. Like cattle they were bought and sold and their monetary value was registered in the bookkeeping of the enslavers. When the enslaver died they were auctioned together with his or her furniture and other cattle. The ideological justification of this system was found in biological racism. And it was articulated by the most prominent scientists and philosophers of White Enlightenment during the period of the trans-Atlantic enslavement.

4.4 Cultural racism

4.4.1 The abolition of enslavement

Three major changes took place since the second half of the nineteenth century that impacted the nature of racism.

The first change is the legal abolition of enslavement of Africans in the Americas. The system of enslavement was initially imposed upon the indigenous population who were annihilated in different parts of the Americas, especially the Caribbean. It took a new turn with the massive kidnapping of people from Africa and their transportation to the Americas. More than 12 million Africans were kidnapped (based on known ship records). Two million lost their life during the trans-Atlantic voyage. The rest were enslaved mainly in Brazil (46%), the English Caribbean (22%), the Spanish Caribbean (12%), the French Caribbean (11%), the Dutch Caribbean (4%) and the United States (4%).²⁷³

The legal abolition of enslavement in the Americas occurred in the course of the nineteenth century. In 1804 Africans in Haiti under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture (1743-1803) abolished enslavement after a successful revolution that started in 1791 and led to the independence of Haiti on January 1, 1804. In Eurocentric history textbooks this major historical event is not even registered in a footnote and is part of the colonization of the mind. The legal abolition of enslavement is regarded as an expression of the high morals of European civilization (see **paragraph xx**).

In 1838 the British abolished enslavement in their colonies, followed by the French in 1848, the Dutch in 1863, the Americans in 1865, the Spaniards in 1866 (Cuba) and 1873 (Puerto Rico) and the Portuguese in 1888.

Racism was far from over with the legal abolition of enslavement. In the United States since the end of the nineteenth century apartheid laws (called segregation or Jim Crow laws in the US) were enacted that again provided racism with a legal base with the one-drop rule. According to this rule a person with one ancestor from Africa is considered black. The ancestor can be traced to the earliest known person from Africa, even though their descendent can appear to be white. In all countries the social practice of segregation and discrimination were prevalent even after the political independence of the colonies.

The impact of the legal abolition of enslavement is that blacks were no longer regarded as cattle. Legally they were not treated as animals and could not be bought and sold like animals. But they were considered to be inferior human beings, not only because of their genes (colour of the skin) but also because of their culture (barbaric and uncivilized). And that had its repercussions on the ideology of racism. It shifted from biological racism to cultural racism. The argument shifted from inferior biology to inferior culture.

4.4.2 The geographical shift

The second change that brought about the evolution from biological to cultural racism is the geographical shift from the colonization of the Americas to the colonization of the rest of the world.

Western colonialism started in 1492 with the first attempt to occupy Indigenous land in the Americas. The sixteenth century was dominated by Spain and Portugal with a strong focus on the Americas. Spain colonized the Caribbean, Central America and Latin America. Portugal occupied Brazil. In Africa the Portuguese started colonizing some parts of Mozambique, Guinea, Zanzibar and Cabo Verde. In Asia they attempted to occupy parts of India (Goa), Malaysia and Sri Lanka.

In the seventeenth century Spain and Portugal got fierce competition from a Spanish colony in Europe: the Netherlands. In 1566 the Dutch started their eighty year long war for independence from Spain. The Spanish had already established colonies in the Americas. By breaking the Spanish power outside of Europe the Dutch hoped to strengthen their position in Europe. So the Dutch combatted the Spaniards in the Americas and established colonies in the Caribbean. For a short period they even ousted the Portuguese from Brazil. In the second half of the seventeenth century the Dutch and the Portuguese established forts on the west coast of Africa to organise the mass kidnapping of Africans for the colonies in the Americas. They also extended their influence in South Africa and in Asia (Indonesia).

From the eighteenth century onwards the French and the British entered the colonization scheme. They started in the Americas with the colonization of the Caribbean and North America. Then they expanded to Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

In the second half of the nineteenth century practically the whole globe had been colonized by seven countries of Western Europe: Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Britain and Germany. Denmark and Sweden hold small insignificant territories in the Caribbean. The world had now become an interconnected global system of economic, social, political and cultural institutions: companies, states, armies, populations, communities, educational institutions.

The system of oppression and exploitation was not only based on enslavement in the Americas. New and more refined methods were developed to keep huge societies in check, especially in Asia and the Middle East where small armies had to control huge masses of people with ancient civilizations. The shift to the Orient brought about a shift in the narrative of racism. The West acknowledged that great civilizations of Asia and the Middle East existed, but they were considered to be inferior to Western civilization. In biological racism superiority and inferiority were argued from biological characteristics (skin colour, hair texture, physiological appearance). From the second half of the nineteenth century onwards the mechanisms of oppression and exploitation were based on using indigenous elites and the colonization of the mind together with the instruments of political rule (divide and rule) and military oppression and intimidation. The West now controlled not inferior human beings, but inferior cultures.

4.4.3 The rise of the social sciences

The abolition of enslavement in the Americas and the shift of Western colonization to the Orient in the second half of the nineteenth century was accompanied by the rise of the social sciences in Europe. This is the third factor that explains the change from biological to cultural racism.

A new generation of thinkers articulated a new form of science that searched for historical laws of societies in the same way as natural scientists searched natural laws: August Comte (1798-1859), Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) and Max Weber (1864-1920) and Karl Marx (1818-1883) laid the foundation for Eurocentric social sciences. In their footsteps followed numerous scholars who ultimately built the structure of social sciences that produced the narrative of cultural racism.

Cultural racism was based on the argument of superior and inferior cultures. All human beings are biologically equal. But not all cultures are equal. There are superior and inferior cultures. The concept of superiority and inferiority is based on two arguments: the argument about social evolution and the argument of rational thinking originating in Europe.

The first argument goes as follows: human societies evolve in stages of development from low to high. European society is the highest phase of development of human societies and there it is superior to non-European societies.

One example of this argument is found in the theory of social Darwinism. Darwin's evolution theory showed that natural life has developed from simple organisms such as the single cell amoeba to complex creatures like the human being. In the process of evolution the mechanism of natural selection ensures the survival of the fittest. The weakest species who cannot adapt to their changing environment will perish and the strongest will survive.

In a similar way social scientists from the school of social Darwinism argued that human societies evolved from simple to complex. As Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) writes: *"Our large civilized nations as much exceed primitive savage tribes, as a mammal does a zoophyte."*²⁷⁴ Evolution is a matter of growing from simple to complex and thus from backwardness to modernity. Spencer makes detailed comparisons about the evolution in the animal kingdom with the evolution of social organism (human society): *"Among the lowest races, as the Bushmen, we find but incipient aggregation: sometimes single families, sometimes two or three families wandering about together."*²⁷⁵ The more complex society becomes with the advance of technology and the social division of labour, the more higher it develops as a social organism. The evolution from simple to complex is also an evolution from inferior to superior. Western Europe with its industrial society is the most advanced and thus superior society in the evolution of social organisms.

Social Darwinism became discredited because of the link with eugenics. Francis Galton (1822-1911), a half-cousin of Darwin using the tools of statistics and anthropology, introduced the concept of eugenics: *"Eugenics is the science which deals with all influences that improve the inborn qualities of a race."*²⁷⁶ Once you understand how natural selection works you can develop "breeding" programs to improve the genetic stock of a population: rules for marriage and sexuality, forced sterilization, apartheid laws like in South Africa and the USA till 1965 etc. Eugenics became discredited because of its use by the Nazis to justify the Holocaust and the extermination of Jews and Roma people. Like Spencer's theory of social organisms, the theory of eugenics drew on Darwin's evolution theory. Thus Social Darwinism and the concept of inferior and superior social organisms got marginalized in social sciences.

In social and cultural anthropology Lewis Morgan (1818-1881), an American anthropologist, dealt with the link between social and technological progress and the role of family and property relations. He concluded from his research into evolution of ancient societies: *"It can now be asserted upon convincing evidence that savagery preceded barbarism in all the tribes of mankind, as barbarism is known to have preceded civilization. The history of the human race is one in source, one in experience, one in progress."*²⁷⁷ In his evolutionary scheme there are three stages of historical development: savagery, barbarism and civilization. During savagery – of which there are three stages: lower, middle and upper – humans lived from fisheries, fruits and nuts, discovered fire, acquired speech, used bows and arrows and ended up with the invention of the art of pottery. During barbarism – of which there are also three stages: lower, middle and upper – the domestication of animals was combined with the cultivation of maize and plants by irrigation, together with the use of adobe-brick and stone in housing.

Civilization begins with the use of a phonetic alphabet and the production of literary records.

The concept is of a linear development of human society. Some societies cannot move beyond a certain stage because of natural and geographical limitations.

Marx and Engels relied to a certain extent on Morgan to develop their concept of the linear development of modes of production. In their scheme human society evolves from primitive communism, through enslavement and feudalism to capitalism and socialism and ending in communism. Apart from these six modes of production of which the first four had a historical existence and the last are yet to come, there was also an Asiatic mode of production that did not fit in the linear scheme, but was seen as a distinctive mode of production.

Primitive communism was the stage where there was no private property, the community shared everything in order to survive, there was no separate class to rule the community and the economy was based on gathering and hunting.

In slave societies classes began to appear; the ruling class of enslavers controlled the oppressed class of enslaved with a state apparatus (administration and repressive apparatus); the economy as based on agriculture; there was private landownership but the enslaved were part of the property of the landowner.

In feudalism the ruling classes consist of different sections: kings, lords who are protected by king, clerics who keep people in check through religion and serfs who work on the land and pay tribute to the lords while keeping a portion of the produce. In feudal cities there are guilds of merchants and craftsmen that regulate social and labour relations.

In capitalism factories arise and workers have nothing but their labour power for sale to capitalists who own the means of production. Even in agriculture landowners hire labourers who they can fire if they don't need them. The market regulates production and distribution of goods and services.

Marx and Engels initially referred to these four modes of production as a linear development of social formations in history.

Socialism was a mode of production that would be established with the downfall of capitalism and where the means of production are in the hands of the workers state. The workers would be awarded goods and services on the basis of their contribution with their labour power.

Communism will be the mode of production where technology ensures that everyone lives in an affluent society and gets goods and services based on their needs.

The scheme did not adequately describes the societies in ancient Egypt, India, China and Russia after the Mongol invasion so Marx came up with the concept of the Asiatic mode of production. Its characteristics are the need to control large areas of land with small villages by means of a despotic repressive state apparatus and maintain large irrigation networks and transportation routes. The despotic political class was supported by taxes that were levied on the villagers.²⁷⁸

Marx adhered to the concept of social evolution where European colonialism was seen as a progressive force in world history. His evaluation of the British occupation of India sums it all. Colonialism brought civilization to India. Marx: *"English interference having placed the spinner in Lancashire and the weaver in Bengal, or sweeping away both Hindoo spinner and weaver, dissolved these small semi-barbarian, semi-civilized communities, by blowing up their economical basis, and thus produced the greatest, and to speak the truth, the only social revolution ever heard of in Asia... We must not forget that these idyllic village-communities... had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies... We must not forget that this undignified, stagnatory, and vegetative life, that this passive sort of existence evoked on the other part, in contradistinction, wild, aimless, unbounded forces of destruction and rendered murder itself a religious rite in Hindostan. We must not forget that these little communities were contaminated by distinctions of caste and by slavery, that they subjugated man to external circumstances instead of elevating man the sovereign of*

circumstances, that they transformed a self-developing social state into never changing natural destiny, and thus brought about a brutalizing worship of nature, exhibiting its degradation in the fact that man, the sovereign of nature, fell down on his knees in adoration of Kanuman, the monkey, and Sabbala, the cow. England, it is true, in causing a social revolution in Hindostan, was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in her manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is, can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution."²⁷⁹

Hegel, Marx' teacher, concluded in his essays on world history that Europe became the pinnacle of world civilization: *"We have thus designated the tripartite geographical division of world history, from east to west, from southeast to northwest, from rising to setting. World history has arisen in the southeast, and it has subsided into itself to the northwest."*²⁸⁰

The theories of phases of development of human society invariably end with Western Europe as the historical outcome of social evolution. The superiority of the West was a matter of fact and the result of scientific research.

The criteria of superiority inferiority were "objective": technological development, social division of labour, organization of the economy, the development of science etc. It was a matter of science (true or false), not of ethics (right or wrong).

In the twentieth century the development of capitalism found its apex in Nazi Germany. Yet no Eurocentric historian would regard Nazi Germany as the highest culmination of world history. Then knowledge about world history is no longer a matter of true or false, but of right or wrong. Ethics comes into play to judge the nature of society.

In DTM that is exactly our criterion to judge the nature of social evolution. Western societies have been founded on genocide and enslavement, oppression and exploitation of the largest part of world population. On ethical grounds these societies cannot be regarded as the zenith of world civilization. They led to the downfall of human values, integrity and dignity. The concept of superior cultures is a way to cover this up. It is possible for a society to be advanced in economics and technology but backward in culture as Nazi Germany has shown.

The second argument in cultural racism is based on the notion of European rationalism. This argument holds that Europe possessed certain cultural properties that enabled their superior development. August Comte uses a theory of historical phases in social evolution that is based on how knowledge is produced (see **paragraph 2.2.1**). In the societies that are in the theological phase explanations of natural and social phenomena are sought in the work of supernatural beings. In societies that are in a metaphysical phase the explanation is sought not in supernatural beings, but in abstract forces that influences nature. In the positivist phase the explanation is found in positivist science. European culture due to the work of the Enlightenment succeeded in separating the church from the state and knowledge from religion. This unique characteristic makes European culture superior to other cultures where rationalism and reason is held back in favour of superstition, rituals and belief systems. Rationalism is about logical reasoning and proof. Rationalism is the basis of science. Science developed in Europe because of this peculiar property of European culture. And this enabled the rise of technology, modernity, progress and capitalism.

Max Weber developed this argument in his studies on religion and capitalist development. He published four books on this topic: Confucianism and Taoism in China, Hinduism and Buddhism in India, Judaism and Protestantism.

He puts the question: *"What combination of circumstances the fact should be attributed that in Western civilization, and in Western civilization only, cultural phenomena have appeared which ... lie in a line of development having universal significance and value. Only in the West does science exist at a stage of development which we recognize to-day*

as valid. Empirical knowledge, reflection on problems of the cosmos and of life, philosophical and theological wisdom of the most profound sort, are not confined to it, though in the case of the last the full development of a systematic theology must be credited to Christianity under the influence of Hellenism."²⁸¹

The rise of science is closely linked to the rise of capitalism, which took place in Western Europe. Weber makes an extensive comparison between European and non-European sciences (mathematics, architecture, mechanism, engineering, physics, medicine, biochemistry, history, law, art, education) and concludes: "*A rational, systematic, and specialized pursuit of science, with trained and specialized personnel, has only existed in the West in a sense at all approaching its present dominant place in our culture.*"²⁸²

According to Weber "*capitalism is identical with the pursuit of profit, and forever renewed profit, by means of continuous, rational, capitalistic enterprise.*"²⁸³ Capitalism is based on rationalism and a certain spirit that was only to be found in Western culture. Weber: "*Capitalism existed in China, India, Babylon, in the classic world, and in the Middle Ages. But in all these cases, as we shall see, this particular ethos was lacking.*"²⁸⁴

In Europe the capitalist spirit was the strongest in a particular brand of Christianity: Protestantism and even more specific: Calvinism. Weber: "*It seems more than the others to have promoted the development of the spirit of capitalism.*"²⁸⁵

The argument of the cultural superiority of the West is thus based on specific characteristics of Western culture: its achievements in science and technology through rationalist thinking. Its barbarism with genocide, mass killings, enslavement, oppression and exploitation are left out of this picture.

If Western society is exclusively based on rationalism, where does it leave non-Western societies. Are they based on irrationalism? What does irrational thinking mean? That you don't think with your head, but with other parts of your body? That you don't think logical, but illogical? Insult has become part of Eurocentric sciences.

Rationalism is not only about logic and reason. It is also about ethics. Even Weber realizes that when he writes about Asian views of the spirit of capitalism: "*To all, highly developed Asiatic intellectual soteriology this could only appear either as hopelessly onesided philistinism or barbaric greed for life.*"²⁸⁶ Soteriology is the study of religious doctrines of salvation. Philistinism is a world view that bases the attitude in life on material gains and neglects art, beauty and spirituality. In Asian culture the spirit of capitalism would be judged on the basis of the ethical category of greed and the value of life is seen in a spiritual context and not limited to material gains. Is this irrational or a different ethics of rationalism?

4.4.5 Racism and Islamophobia

In the sixteenth century theological racism argued superiority and inferiority from the position that Christianity is a superior religion. Well into the 21st century the idea of Christian superiority is to be found on the internet on Christian fundamentalist websites, but theology is not the authority of knowledge production in the West.

From the seventeenth through the nineteenth century biological racism argued superiority and inferiority from biological traits (genes, skin colour, eyes, intellectual capacity, hair texture etc). Biological racism became discredited in the West because Hitler used it to justify the Jewish Holocaust. At the end of the 20th century two white social scientists – Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray – tried to link intelligence to genes and argued in their book *The Bell Curve* that blacks have a lower IQ than whites because of a combination of genetic and environmental factors.²⁸⁷

In the second half of the nineteenth century cultural racism argued superiority and inferiority from theories about social evolution and the specific cultural features in European thinking (rationalism). Since then the social sciences have become instrumental in the colonization of the mind, as we shall show in the rest of this book. Cultural racism was put into apartheid laws in many colonized countries. These laws were

abolished after the decolonization processes in the world. In the United States apartheid laws crumbled in the sixties of the 20th century. In South Africa only in 1994 free and general elections ended the system. In Israel apartheid still continues well into the 21st century.

Since the second half of the 20th century, more specifically the last quarter, a specific form of cultural racism gained worldwide importance: Islamophobia.

The term Islamophobia is not an adequate term to characterize this form of cultural racism. A phobia is defined as *"an irrational, intense fear of a person, object, situation, sensation, experience, thought, or stimulus event that is not shared by the consensual community and is thus out of proportion to any danger. The individual cannot easily explain or understand the phobia, has no voluntary control over the anxiety response, and seeks to avoid the dreaded situation or stimulus."*²⁸⁸

Islamophobia is not primarily about fear of Islam by non-Muslims. It is about institutional racism that propagates the inferiority of Islam in comparison to the superiority of Western rationalism. And thus it is well vested in the tradition of racism since the start of colonialism. It goes back to the arguments in the Valladolid debate in 1550 about the barbarism of non-Christians. The Muslims are the new barbarians. A white political scientist, Samuel Huntington, writes in this context about a clash of civilizations: *"Separate codes governed behaviour toward those who are 'like us' and the 'barbarians' who are not. The rules of the nations of Christendom for dealing with each other were different from those for dealing with the Turks and other 'heathens'."*²⁸⁹

The stereotypes of barbarism that are used in the Valladolid debate are now applied to Muslims. Las Casas defines a barbarian as *"any cruel, inhuman, wild, and merciless man acting against human reason out of anger or native disposition, so that, putting aside decency, meekness, and human moderation, he becomes hard, severe, quarrelsome, unbearable, cruel, and plunges blindly into crimes that only the wildest beasts of the forest would commit."* He adds that they are *"cruel, savage, scottish, stupid, and strangers to reason."* (see par. 3.2.3.4).

In the Valladolid debate the question was: *"Is it lawful for the King of Spain to wage war on the Indians, before preaching the faith to them, in order to subject them to his rule, so that afterward they may be more easily instructed in the faith?"*

Nowadays the same question is posed in the West with a different twist: *"Is it lawful for the Western empire to wage war against the Muslims before preaching the Enlightenment philosophy to them in order to subject them to their rule so afterwards they might be civilized and become rational human beings?"*

One pivotal event that triggered this line of thought was the 1979 Iranian revolution. That was the first factor in the rise of Islamophobia. Suddenly the West was confronted by Muslim leaders who were revolutionary and anti-colonial and were able to topple their most trusted ally of the West in the Middle East: dictator Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi. And the leader of the revolution was a cleric who was able to mobilize millions of followers to establish a new kind of state: an Islamic state. In the West Khomeini has been vilified as the classic barbarian. He puts the Iranian revolution in an anti-colonial tradition: *"Islam is a religion of those who struggle for truth and justice, of those who clamour for liberty and independence. It is the school of those who fight against colonialism."*²⁹⁰

The West organised a whole scale war against Iran with Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussain in the driver seat. The war started in 1980 with an invasion of Iran by Iraq and lasted for eight year.

In Turkey the Justice and Development Party (AKP), founded in 2001, came to power in 2012 with a sweeping two-third majority in parliament. Although splits and internal strife weakened the party Islam became a major political force in Turkey, sometimes allying with the West and sometimes going against the West.

In Egypt the Muslim Brotherhood, founded in 1928 and banned for many years from politics, was legalized in 2012 and won the presidential election in 2012 after thirty years of military dictatorship.

There is not one systematic and coherent body of anti-colonial thought in Islam, even in the criticism of the West. However, Islam did become a political force in the Middle East that confronts the Western empire in the oil-rich region. Islamophobia was a Eurocentric response to the rising tide of these forces.

The second factor in the rise of Islamophobia in the West is in the failed policy of the West to engage terrorist groups claiming to work from an Islamic ideology as a consistent ally of the West. The US financed and trained terrorist groups such as Al Qaida to fight the Russians in Afghanistan between 1797 and 1989. The Russians were defeated, but the West did not prevail. These groups at times turned against the West. Osama bin Laden got the inspiration for his plan to attack the Twin Towers in New York in 2001 from the Israeli attack on towers and buildings in Beirut in the 1982 invasion of Lebanon. US allies got out of control in Afghanistan. The same pattern would be repeated in the next decades where the West on the one hand supports such terrorist groups against the rising influence of Iran and on the other hand claims to be fighting these groups and their political ideology. The failed policy of the rise of "Islamic" terrorism became a factor in the rise of Islamophobia.

The third factor is the rise of a new generation of activists in the Muslim communities in the West that takes up the fight for dignity and their own identity. There are an estimated 25 million Muslims in Europe on a population of 520 million.²⁹¹ In the US there are more than 3 million on a population of 320 million.²⁹² Their presence and the rise of a generation of young Muslims born and raised in the West with their experience of racism and discrimination puts the question of European and American identity on the agenda, especially when they refuse to assimilate into the Western culture and criticize the idea of the superiority of the West. Samuel Huntington points this out: *"Western culture is challenged by groups within Western societies. One such challenge comes from immigrants from other civilizations who reject assimilation and continue to adhere to and to propagate the values, customs, and cultures of their home societies."*²⁹³

The answer to this new challenge by the West is not a free and open debate that questions Western concepts of identity and superiority, but the demonization of Islam and a policy that oppresses Muslim communities. France became the first country in Europe where the state interferes in the personal life of Muslim women by banning the burka and niqab from public space (walking down the street, taking a bus, shopping, picking up kids from school, or going to work). In 2004 it prohibited religious symbols from public school spaces. Since April 11, 2011, any woman who wears the burka or niqab can be fined 150 Euros or forced to take a course on French citizenship. The state now decides on the dress code of women. Islamophobia is a narrative to justify the struggle against Muslims that claim a space for their own identity in the West.

The fourth factor is the rise of the police state in the West and the need to justify this with Islamophobia. Since 2001 civil rights in the West have been seriously limited. Freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, the right to a fair and public trial, protection against arbitrary state intervention in private lives are being curtailed. In the USA these limitations on civil rights were laid down in the Patriot Act. In 2002 the United States established a military prison camp in Guantanamo (a piece of Cuban territory illegally occupied by the USA since 1903), where they hold people indefinitely without trial. They are tortured by the US without any protection of the law whatsoever. In the United Kingdom under the Prevent Act children can be taken away from their parent's home if the state suspects that they are being radicalized. The crackdown on civil liberties in the rising police states in the West is justified with Islamophobic narratives.

The fifth factor is the role of Zionism in defending the apartheid state of Israel with the use of Islamophobia. Since the establishment of the apartheid state of Israel in 1948 Islamophobia was used as a justification of the occupation of Palestinian land. Israel is

presented as the beacon of Western Enlightenment in a backward Arab region, the only flourishing democracy, the defender of Western values in the Orient. The Western support for Israel is justified with Islamophobia.

These five factors account for the rise of Islamophobia since the second half of the 20th century. Islamophobia is based on the structure of arguments that were used since 1493 to justify colonialism. In knowledge production it used the arguments of the White Enlightenment on rationalism and backwardness of non-European cultures from cultural racism. Islamophobia therefore is just a form of cultural racism that established in Europe since the second half of the nineteenth century. The struggle against Islamophobia is a struggle that involves challenging the forces that gave rise to islamophobia.

4.4.6 Institutional racism

I have explained above how racism has been conceptualized in knowledge production, which is part of the cultural dimension of colonialism. The production of this knowledge is now institutionalized in universities, research centres and think tanks. It constitutes institutional racism.

The concept of institutional racism was introduced by two activists of the American civil rights movement: Stokely Carmichael (later known as Kwame Ture) and Charles Hamilton. They define racism as follows: *"By 'racism' we mean the predication of decisions and policies on considerations of race for the purpose of subordinating a racial group and maintaining control over that group."*²⁹⁴

Then they explain that whites think of racism in terms of overt and covert, but blacks put the white covert concept in the context of institutional racism: *"Racism is both overt and covert. It takes two, closely related forms: individual whites acting against individual blacks, and acts by the total white community against the black community. We call these individual racism and institutional racism. The first consists of overt acts by individuals, which cause death, injury or the violent destruction of property. This type can be recorded by television cameras; it can frequently be observed in the process of commission. The second type is less overt, far more subtle, less identifiable in terms of specific individuals committing the acts. But it is no less destructive of human life. The second type originates in the operation of established and respected forces in the society, and thus receives far less public condemnation than the first type."*²⁹⁵

They provide an example to explain the difference between individual (overt) and institutional (covert) racism: *"When white terrorists bomb a black church and kill five black children, that is an act of individual racism, widely deplored by most segments of the society. But when in the same city—Birmingham, Alabama—five hundred black babies die each year because of the lack of proper food, shelter and medical facilities, and thousands more are destroyed and maimed physically, emotionally and intellectually because conditions of poverty and discrimination in the black community, that is a function of institutional racism. When a black family moves into a home in a white neighbourhood and is stoned, burned or routed out, they are victims of an overt act of individual racism which many people will condemn at least in words. But it is institutional racism that keeps black people locked in dilapidated slum tenements, subject to the daily prey of exploitative slumlords, merchants, loan sharks and discriminatory real estate agents. The [SH: white] society either pretends it does not know of this latter situation, or is in fact incapable of doing anything meaningful about it."*²⁹⁶

Carmichael and Hamilton clarify how institutional racism operates in the daily practices and attitudes of whites: *"Institutional racism relies on the active and pervasive operation of anti-black attitudes and practices. A sense of superior group position prevails: whites are 'better' than blacks; therefore blacks should be subordinated to whites. This is a racist attitude and it permeates the society, on both the individual and institutional level, covertly and overtly. 'Respectable' individuals can absolve themselves from individual blame: they would never plant a bomb in a church; they would never stone a black*

family. But they continue to support political officials and institutions that would and do perpetuate institutionally racist policies. Thus acts of overt, individual racism may not typify the society, but institutional racism does—with the support of covert, individual attitudes of racism."²⁹⁷

Carmichael and Hamilton make a profound link between institutional racism and colonialism. They write: *"Institutional racism has another name: colonialism."*²⁹⁸

*They explain: "One normally associates a colony with a land and a people subjected to, and physically separated from, the "Mother Country." This is not always the case, however; in South African and Rhodesia, black and white inhabit the same land—with blacks subordinated to whites just as in the English, French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish colonies. It is the objective relationship which counts, not rhetoric (such as constitutionally articulating equal rights) or geography... Black people in the United States have a colonial relationship to the larger society, a relationship characterized by institutional racism."*²⁹⁹

In the DTM framework I distinguish five dimensions of colonialism: economic, social, political, cultural and geographical (see paragraph 1.1). In the course of the history of colonialism different type of institutions have operated in these dimensions. This book focuses on how the mind has been colonized and can be decolonized. I will not delve into the historical development of the institutions in the different dimensions, although such a study is very much needed.

I will outline the main elements of the theory of institutional racism that distinguish it from other theories.

The first is the historical approach. Racism is a historical phenomenon that came into existence with colonialism as has been explained above extensively.

The second is the focus on community instead of individuals or classes. Carmichael and Hamilton focus on the black community, but in general racism is about communities. I define a community as a group of people that identify themselves on the basis of a common bond that is rooted in a shared historical experience, language, culture or physical traits. The racist narrative is articulated in terms of superiority/inferiority of communities, not of classes or individuals.

The third is the acknowledgement of mental slavery and the colonization of the mind. Part of culture is the manifestation of knowledge in material culture (clothing, food, housing, architecture etc) and immaterial culture (language, art, customs, rituals etc). The notion of superiority and inferiority is permeated in material and immaterial culture as I will explain in the rest of the book. Mental slavery is the ultimate expression of racism and should be acknowledged as such.

The fourth is the relationship between institutions in the different dimensions. Racism is not only cultural. It is economic, social, political and geographical. These dimensions are interrelated. In the economic dimension of colonialism wealth produced by the colonized communities was transferred to the colonizer in different ways: from brutal enslavement of the indigenous people and open robbery of their lands, massive kidnapping of Africans for enslavement in the Americas and different forms of forced labour to unequal exchange. In the social dimension of colonialism racism was institutionalized in the way communities and social relations were organised along racial and ethnic lines. Politically racism was maintained with different mechanisms of political control of oppressed communities: from outright repression to co-optation. Geographically communities were regionally concentrated and connected.

Institutional racism acknowledges that racism is institutionalized in the five dimensions of colonialism. Sometimes artist can explain institutional racism better than academic. Decolonial stand-up comedian Aamer Rahman from Australia explained the concept in the following comedy sketch.

Rahman: "A lot of people don't like my comedy, a lot of White people don't like my comedy, a lot of White people say this to me: 'Hey Aamer, hey. Get on stage, you make your jokes about White people, you say "White people this, White people that." What if I did something like that, huh? What if I got on stage and said yeah, "Black people are like this, Muslims are like that." You'd probably call me a racist, wouldn't you?'

And I say, 'Yeah, yeah I would. Yeah, you should never do that, That's bad for your health.'

They're like, 'Well you do that Aamer! You do that. You get on stage, you make your jokes about White people. Don't you think that's a kind of racist? Don't you think that's... dun dun duun... reverse racism?'

I said, 'No, I don't think that's reverse racism,' not because I think reverse racism exists, I think if you ask some Black people they'll tell you flat out 'There's no such thing as reverse racism.' I don't agree with that. I think there is such a thing as reverse racism, and I can be a reverse racist if I wanted to. All I would need would be a time machine, right? And what I'd do is I would get in my time machine and I'd go back in time to before Europe colonized the world, right? And I'd convince the leaders of Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Central and South America to invade and colonize Europe, right?

Just occupy them, steal their land and resources. Set up some kind of like, I don't know, Trans-Asian slave trade, where we exported white people to work on giant rice plantations in China. Just ruin Europe over the course of a couple centuries, so all their descendants would wanna migrate out and live in the places where black and brown people come from.

Of course in that time, I'd make sure I set up systems that privilege black and brown people at every conceivable social, political and economic opportunity. And white people will never have any hope of real self-determination. Every couple of decades make up some fake war as an excuse to go bomb them back to the Stone Age and say it's for their own good because their culture's inferior. And just for kicks, subject white people to coloured people's standards of beauty, so they end up hating the colour of their own skin, eyes and hair.

If after hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years of that, I got on stage at a comedy show and said, 'Hey, what's the deal with White people? Why can't they dance?' That would be reverse racism."³⁰⁰

4.5 Liberal theories of racism

4.5.1 General characteristics

The liberal theories of racism are rooted in a common approach that centres the individual in the analysis of racism. In psychological theories racism is about the perceptions and behaviour of individuals, mostly of the racist who is inhibited with prejudices. Studies on racism and the Holocaust focus on how personalities are formed in their psychological constitution. Theories of white privilege, everyday racism, intersectionality and critical race take the individual experiences as the basis for their analysis.

The historical connection of racism and colonialism in its three forms (theological, biological and cultural racism) is absent in their analysis. The epistemology of Western Enlightenment that laid the theoretical foundation of racism is not part of their theory.

4.5.2 The psychological approach

The psychological approach works with the concept of prejudice. The four volume encyclopaedia on prejudice and discrimination defines prejudice as "an opinion about an individual, group, or phenomenon that is developed without proof or systematic evidence. The prejudgment may be favourable but is more often unfavourable and may become

institutionalized in the form of a country's laws or customs."³⁰¹ Racism is defined as "stereotyping and generalizing about people, usually negatively, because of their race; commonly a basis of discrimination against members of racial groups".³⁰²

Opinions influence the behaviour of individuals. Negative stereotyping is seen as the cause of racist behaviour. The assumption is that all people are born with a mind that serves as a blank slate (*Tabula Rasa*) that is filled with ideas and perceptions through experience and education. Prejudices are part of these ideas.

The research on prejudices and racism tries to show that racist opinions have no factual basis. Racism is combated by giving the right information so that opinions and thus behaviour is based on "correct" information. And "correct" information is information that proves that prejudices are wrong. A rational person would then cast away racist opinions and change his or her behaviour.

4.5.3 The personality approach

A special case of the psychological approach is the personality approach that is common in explanations of the Jewish Holocaust. In 1950 German sociologist Theodoro Adorno developed the concept of the Authoritarian Personality. Adorno was concerned with fascism and anti-Semitism because of Nazism and the Holocaust. He argued that *"the political, economic, and social convictions of an individual often form a broad and coherent pattern, as if bound together by a 'mentality' or 'spirit', and that this pattern is an expression of deep-lying trends in his personality."*³⁰³ There is certain type of individual who is prone to becoming a fascist. Adorno: *"The major concern was with the potentially fascist individual, one whose structure is such as to render him particularly susceptible to antidemocratic propaganda."*³⁰⁴

Adorno and his team conducted interviews with over 2,000 persons to construct the type of Authoritarian Personality. He concluded that childhood experiences led to the construction of a certain type of personality that makes one person more than the other vulnerable for fascist propaganda. He constructed an F-scale (F stands for fascist) that tells how vulnerable a person is based on nine traits. A certain type of personality makes it easier for an individual to become a fascist.

Adorno never gave thought whether his theory would be relevant for other forms of racism, notable apartheid, which was in full swing in the USA when Adorno lived in America after fleeing from Nazi Germany.

A decade later, in 1961, Stanley Milgram from Yale University conducted an experiment, known as the Milgram experiment, to test the willingness of people to obey authority. Participants were instructed by a teacher to administer electric shocks to a learner who had to give answers to a teacher. If the answer was wrong, the participant would press a button that gave the learner an electric shock, which was fake, but the participant did not know that. The voltage was higher as the number of wrong answers increased. Milgram concluded from his experiment: *"Each individual possesses a conscience which to a greater or lesser degree serves to restrain the unimpeded flow of impulses destructive to others. But when he merges his person into an organizational structure, a new creature replaces autonomous man, unhindered by the limitations of individual morality, freed of human inhibition, mindful only of the sanctions of authority."*³⁰⁵ The personality of an individual is moulded by the organizational structure in which it functions. And authority in such a system can lead to a person doing thing against his or her own conscience.

Almost fifty years after Adorno's publication on the authoritarian personality Daniel Goldhagen published a book titled *Hitler's Willing Executioners* in which he poses the questions: *"Did the perpetrators of the Holocaust kill willingly? If so, what motivated them to kill and brutalize Jews? How was this motivation engendered?"*³⁰⁶

He dismisses answers such as peer pressure or fear for retaliation. Goldhagen: *"The evidence that no German was ever killed or incarcerated for having refused to kill Jews is conclusive."*³⁰⁷ His conclusion is: *"A demonological antisemitism, of the virulent racial*

variety, was the common structure of the perpetrators' cognition and of German society in general. The German perpetrators, in this view, were assenting mass executioners, men and women who, true to their own eliminationist antisemitic beliefs, faithful to their cultural antisemitic credo, considered the slaughter to be just."³⁰⁸ The personality that developed in Germany was the result of a culture of anti-Semitism that had existed for a long time.

4.5.4 Theory of white privilege

The concept of white privilege is popular in activist and academic circles. It was introduced in 1988 by a white feminist from America, Peggy McIntosh, in an article titled *White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences through Work on Women's Studies*.³⁰⁹ A year later she published a shorter version under the title *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*.³¹⁰

She came up with the concept by looking at how white men treat white women. McIntosh: "Through work to bring materials and perspectives from Women's Studies into the rest of the curriculum, I have often noticed men's unwillingness to grant that they are overprivileged in the curriculum, even though they may grant that women are disadvantaged. Denials that amount to taboos surround the subject of advantages that men gain from women's disadvantages. These denials protect male privilege from being fully recognized, acknowledged, lessened, or ended."³¹¹

And then she extends it to racism. Racism becomes a matter of privileges: "I think whites are carefully taught not to recognize white privilege, as males are taught not to recognize male privilege. So I have begun in an untutored way to ask what it is like to have white privilege."³¹²

How does McIntosh turn racist oppression, exploitation and injustice of people of colour into a privilege of white people? She uses four techniques.

First, she changes the origin of racism as a phenomenon that is historically rooted in colonialism into an occurrence whose origin is unclear and invisible. McIntosh: "I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks."

If racism is an invisible package of unearned assets, then you don't have to call it racism. White privilege is now a more suitable term than racism, a term that has a historical background that is rooted in colonialism.

Second, she replaces oppression, exploitation and injustice with "unearned assets". Rape, theft, murder, kidnapping, enslavement disappear in a comparison of a knapsack of provisions like maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas etc. If you talk about a map you possess and another person is missing, then you don't need to talk about a historical crime. Her examples of white privilege are all on the level of daily interaction between individuals and nothing substantial in the field of institutional racism. She made a list of 46 examples. Here are a few.

"1. I can, if I wish, arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.

11. I can be casual about whether or not to listen to another woman's voice in a group in which she is the only member of her race.

21. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.

31. I can choose to ignore developments in minority writing and minority activist programs, or disparage them, or learn from them, but in any case, I can find ways to be more or less protected from negative consequences of any of these choices.

41. *I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me.*³¹³

You will not find examples such as:

1. I am living on land that my ancestors have stolen from the Native Americans and don't intend on giving it back.
2. My ancestors had enslaved Africans to work for free for hundreds of years and I don't intend to pay reparations for that historical injustice.

Third, she individualises racism. This enables her to distance herself from her community and claim the willingness to give up white privilege. That is why her list almost invariably starts with "I".

Take this statement: "25. *If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race.*" She does not pose the question: who is the one that pulls me over? It is some abstract colourless force which she has nothing to do with. She is not the traffic cop who pulls you over. That is somebody else.

Fourth, she removes the distinction between perpetrator and victim of a crime. McIntosh: "At school, we were not taught about slavery in any depth; we were not taught to see slaveholders as damaged people. Slaves were seen as the only group at risk of being dehumanized."³¹⁴ So the white criminals who have organised the kidnapping of millions of Africans, shipped them to the Americas and had 2 million killed during the journey and for hundreds of years enslaved and brutalized black people are now placed on the same level as their victims. They are "damaged people" and are also "at risk of being dehumanized".

How would it look like if this method is used in the case of anti-semitism in Nazi-Germany. Compare a Jew who is forced to wear a Jew star with a Nazi who is free from these obligations. If the rule was presented as a privilege of the Nazi rather than an oppression of the Jew it would probably be regarded as an insult to the Jewish people.

White privilege turns injustice of people of colour (racism) into a privilege of white individuals.

4.5.5 The theory of everyday racism

The theory of everyday racism was developed by a feminist of colour, Philomena Essed.³¹⁵ Essed claims that she is doing something unique: "*Many studies have identified the mechanisms of racism at a societal level, but **few** have revealed its pervasive impact on the daily experiences of Blacks.*"³¹⁶

Apparently she is unaware of all the studies by major black thinkers that have dealt extensively with how racism has impacted the daily lives of black people. Just to name a few.

- Marcus Garvey and his million-members Universal Negro Improvement Association had weekly meetings, newspapers, 1,000 branches. What did they discuss, if it was not everyday racism? Their daily experience was the basis of their analysis of racism and reported in their speeches and articles.
- Frantz Fanon analyzed the mechanism of racism in the daily lives of black people: the superiority complex of whites and the inferiority complex of blacks; the use of language and culture, the role of gender and sexuality, the link to colonialism.
- Aimé Césaire has explained in detail how the French policy of assimilation impacted the everyday life of blacks in Martinique and how Pan-Africanist thinkers developed the concept of negritude to combat racism.

- The powerful speeches of Malcolm X covers many themes of how racism impacted the daily lives of blacks, from the speech on "who taught you to hate yourself" to the speech on how the press turns the victim into a perpetrator of racism and vice versa.
- Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton take this as a starting point in their theory of institutional racism and the definition of racism: (my emphasis in bold): *"What is racism? The word has represented **daily reality** to millions of black people for centuries, yet it is rarely defined—perhaps just because that reality has been such a commonplace."*³¹⁷

What are the results if this is her basis to develop a new theory? She provides an inaccurate picture of colonialism. Essed: *"In order to understand the impact of colonization on the development of knowledge of racism it is relevant to take into consideration at least the following factors. First, colonization is characterized by ideological domination."*³¹⁸

Colonialism is first and foremost characterized by brutal occupation of land, genocide of indigenous people, massive enslavement of millions of Africans and other crimes against humanity. The ideology followed the practice, not the other way round.

Essed: *"The colonizers present themselves as a positive identification model and ignore the relation between colonialism and racism."*³¹⁹

This goes against the basic historical facts about colonialism. The colonizer did not present himself as a positive identification model. There was no need for it. Enslavement meant that black human beings were regarded as cattle. They were bought and sold. They were not free men and women who could emulate the example of the white model of human being. They were registered in the bookkeeping of the whites along with the pigs and the chickens as cattle.

Essed: *"Second, the majority of the colonized population has little or no experience with whites on a level of day-to-day interaction."*³²⁰

Again the historical facts contradict this statement. Every morning the enslaved blacks were summoned for the morning report where the whites told them who would be flogged as punishment for disobedience of the previous day. They would hear from the whites what their tasks of the day would be. During their work whites were present with a whip and a gun to ensure that they would work without pay. Blacks were doing the cooking and cleaning of their house. The blacks had massive experience with whites on a daily basis during colonialism.

Essed's claims to develop a new general theory of racism. She does not claim to have developed a new theory for racism in the USA or the Netherlands in the late 20th century. Her ambitious claim is that she has developed a new general theory on racism. *"The central place of experience in my approach to racism suggests an agenda for another kind of research,"* writes Essed.³²¹ *"It is my aim to demonstrate that the concept of everyday racism has a more general relevance in race relations theory."*³²² She claims to *"presents a new approach to the study of racism based on the concept of 'everyday racism'."*³²³

It is a general theory of racism that can help us understand the phenomenon of racism in general, which means racism in its historical development, from the enslavement of Africans in the Americas to the Apartheid system in South Africa. She does not limit her claim to a specific historical period or country. So she must declare it to be a general theory. To characterise enslavement in the Americas between 1650 and 1850 or Apartheid in South Africa as everyday racism would be a grave injustice to the victims of that system and a false picture of their reality.

Taking the Eurocentric positivist tradition as her methodology Essed develops a method to detect racism based on experiences of individuals, not on collective experiences of communities. Collective experience brings you to institutional racism, because a

collective is already an institution. Eurocentric liberalism takes the individual as the actor in social processes. Essed is grounded in the Eurocentric liberal tradition of individualism.

She writes: *"Individuals are actors in a power structure. Power can be used to reproduce racism, but it can also be used to combat racism. This study shows how power, operative in everyday situations, perpetuates racial and ethnic oppression. Note, however, that I focus on racist practices, not on individuals. To talk about 'to be or not to be a racist' simplifies the problem. Although individuals are the agents of racism, my concern is practices and their implications, not the psyche of these individuals."*³²⁴

Power has no colour in Essed's theory of everyday racism. There is no white power, just a neutral power in general that can reproduce racism, but it also can combat racism. Which power is that schizophrenic that is both reproducing and combating racism? The theory of institutional racism holds that power has a colour. White power exists. And white power does not combat racism. Black social movements build power, sometimes in alliance with whites.³²⁵

4.5.6 The theory of intersectionality

The theory of intersectionality was developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw, a civil rights advocate in the USA. The theory has the following propositions.

First is a visualization of the concept of intersection: *"Intersectionality is what occurs when a woman from a minority group . . . tries to navigate the main crossing in the city. . . . The main highway is "racism road." One cross street can be Colonialism, then Patriarchy Street. . . . She has to deal not only with one form of oppression but with all forms, those named as road signs, which link together to make a double, a triple, multiple, a many layered blanket of oppression."*³²⁶

Second is the acknowledgement of multiple oppression. *"Because the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism, any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated. Thus, for feminist theory and antiracist policy discourse to embrace the experiences and concerns of Black women, the entire framework that has been used as a basis for translating 'women's experience' or 'the Black experience' into concrete policy demands must be rethought and recast."*³²⁷

Third is the critique of white feminism by black feminists: *"The value of feminist theory to Black women is diminished because it evolves from a white racial context that is seldom acknowledged. Not only are women of color in fact overlooked, but their exclusion is reinforced when white women speak for and as women... When feminist theory attempts to describe women's experiences through analyzing patriarchy, sexuality, or separate spheres ideology, it often overlooks the role of race."*³²⁸

Fourth is a similar critique of black males by black feminists: She refers to Anna Julia Cooper, a 19th-century Black feminist: *"Cooper often criticized Black leaders and spokespersons for claiming to speak for the race, but failing to speak for Black women. Referring to one of Martin Delaney's public claims that where he was allowed to enter, the race entered with him, Cooper countered: "Only the Black Woman can say, when and where I enter ... then and there the whole Negro race enters with me."*³²⁹

Fifth is the solution that intersectionality brings: *"If any real efforts are to be made to free Black people of the constraints and conditions that characterize racial subordination, then theories and strategies purporting to reflect the Black community's needs must include an analysis of sexism and patriarchy. Similarly, feminism must include an analysis of race if it hopes to express the aspirations of non-white women."*³³⁰

Sixth is the extension of intersectionality beyond the experiences of black women to other marginalized groups: *"It seems that placing those who currently are marginalized in the centre is the most effective way to resist efforts to compartmentalize experiences and undermine potential collective action.... The goal of this activity should be to facilitate*

*the inclusion of marginalized groups for whom it can be said: "When they enter, we all enter."*³³¹

Seventh is the critique of identity politics: *"The problem with identity politics is not that it fails to transcend difference, as some critics charge, but rather the opposite- that it frequently conflates or ignores intra group differences. In the context of violence against women, this elision of difference is problematic, fundamentally because the violence that many women experience is often shaped by other dimensions of their identities, such as race and class. Moreover, ignoring differences within groups frequently contributes to tension among groups, another problem of identity politics that frustrates efforts to politicize violence against women... And so, when the practices expound identity as "woman" or "person of color" as an either/or proposition, they relegate the identity of women of color to a location that resists telling."*³³²

After Crenshaw many people have made contributions to the development of the theory of intersectionality. Crenshaw articulated oppression as the experience of individuals. Berger and Guidroz put it more precisely: *"Race, class, and gender were once seen as separate issues for members of both dominant and subordinate groups. Now, scholars generally agree that these issues (as well as ethnicity, nation, age, and sexuality) — and how they intersect — are integral to individuals' positions in the social world."*³³³

The theory of intersectionality gave a big boost to the solidarity between oppressed groups and was a progressive force in activism. However, its theoretical weaknesses opened the door for sectarianism. My decolonial critique of its theoretical weaknesses is related to six points.

First, the understanding of the nature of oppression as an oppression of individuals. Crenshaw analyses social oppression in term of individual oppression. This argument goes back to the liberal tradition of the White European Enlightenment where philosophers like John Stuart Mill and Immanuel Kant argued that Enlightenment was about the liberation of individuals from oppression by authority.

The narrative of oppression in the theory of intersectionality is constructed on the basis of "experiences" of individuals. The concept of intersection just does not fit in an analysis of oppression of communities. In the theory of intersection a black community can be positioned on the "racism road" but that road cannot intersect with the "patriarchy road" because patriarchy is not about the experience of the black community as a whole. One can argue that black women within that community experience patriarchal oppression and are there on the patriarchy road", but the community as a whole cannot be on the "patriarchy road". That is why the concept of intersection can only be applied in the case of individual oppression (the individual experience) and not in the case of social oppression.

In decolonial theories racism is not the oppression of individuals but of colonized communities. Racism is institutional. It is institutionalized in economic, political, social and cultural institutions that are interconnected in sustaining the racist system of oppression. The individual experiences this institutional racism in his or her life, but that experience covers only a fraction of the system. Take for example the concept of mental slavery that is instilled in colonized people. It is there in the mind, attitude, skills and knowledge of the individual but it goes far beyond the experience of the individual. An inferiority complex is institutionalized in many institutions. They shape the individual experience through social and cultural institutions. To understand these mechanism we should go beyond the experience to look at how the institutions function to shape the experience. The experience of racism is of a totally different nature than the experience of patriarchy. They are rooted in different historical processes.

Second, the understanding of the powers that benefit from and sustain oppression. This is linked to the critique of the individual experience. Let me clarify it with the example of enslavement in the Americas. During enslavement the power of oppression was vested in institutions controlled by white people (economic, political, social, cultural). White people are both white men and white women. White women had the power to sell black men

and women as cattle. Now let us apply the concept of intersection during enslavement. It would be absurd to argue that the black women is on the racism road and intersects the experience of white women on the patriarchy road. Patriarchy – interpreted as male domination - in the white world is totally different from patriarchy in the world of the enslaved. Ramon Grosfoguel explains this by using Frantz Fanon's concept of the zone of being and non-being which is divided by the line of the humans. In the zone of being where the whites live people are recognized and as acknowledged as human beings. There is oppression. But in the zone of non-being the oppression is of a totally different nature. In that zone the colonized people are denied their humanity.

The concept of intersection does not understand the power of oppression. If the individual is at the centre of the analysis then the power that limits the individual is the authority (government, system). That generic entity oppresses individuals on the different roads that intersect. That concept is totally unsuitable to understand oppression during enslavement. The oppressors in enslavement were white men and white women and not some generic entity. The theory of intersectionality does not understand the social nature of oppression nor the powers of oppression.

The third critique is that intersectionality levels all oppressions. One experience cannot be valued higher or lower than another experience of oppression. In the case of enslavement the patriarchal oppression of black women is not different from the patriarchal oppression of white women. The difference between black and white women is not in patriarchal oppression but in the experience of racism, which white women don't experience. Is a white woman with the power to sell a black man or woman on the same road of patriarchy as the black woman? This is clearly ridiculous. The oppression of black people during enslavement is not at the same level as the oppression of white women by white men. Intersectionality levels these oppressions and doesn't make a distinction in the hierarchy of human suffering.

Fourth is the incorporation of western concepts in the theory of intersectionality. The concept of patriarchy is a western concept that looks at the relationship between men and women only through one lens: the lens of male domination and oppression of women. This perspective reduces human relations to a relation between subjects that are in struggle with each other. Undoubtedly there is struggle and oppression. But in decolonial theory we acknowledge another dimension in the relationship between men and women and that is love. Love is expressed in stories, songs and all forms of art. It is expressed in the human relationship between father and daughter, mother and son, uncle and niece, aunt and nephew and lovers. How does this dimension impact the analysis of the relationship between men and women? The concept of patriarchy is one-dimensional and therefore unsuitable to understand the other dimensions of the relationship between men and women.

Fifth is the lack of acknowledgement of the idea that the liberation in one road of the intersection can be used to oppress individuals on another road. In the West women liberation and LGBTQ+ liberation are used in an imperial narrative of Islamophobia to characterize and demonize Muslim communities in the world. In different western countries the narrative of women and LGBTQ+ liberation are used to justify the rise of the police state and organise attacks on the Muslim communities. The age-old colonial narrative of civilizing backward communities is now being used to create a climate of repression of the colonized subject with women and LGBTQ+ liberation as the instrument of civilization and the argument for oppression. Intersectionality has no answer to this challenge because it does not acknowledge women and LGBTQ+ liberation as a possible instrument of oppression.³³⁴

Sixth is the erosion of the concept of solidarity. Intersectionality defines solidarity with the struggle of other oppressed on the basis of the intersection of oppression of individuals. What is the theoretical basis for solidarity with oppressed nations? None. Take the Vietnam war. Che Guevara expressed the notion of solidarity with the struggle of the Vietnamese against American imperialism as a moral necessity for progressive people, not as a result of shared experience. Guevara: *"The solidarity of the progressive*

world with the Vietnamese people has something of the bitter irony of the plebeians cheering on the gladiators in the Roman Circus. To wish the victim success is not enough; one must share his fate. One must join him in death or in victory."³³⁵ What is the basis for the solidarity with the Palestinian people against apartheid in their occupied land on the basis of the theory of intersectionality? None, because there is no intersection of individuals. It is the struggle of an oppressed nation. Ethnic cleansing and genocide goes way beyond the experience of the individual.

In **paragraph xx** I will provide a more elaborate view on the relationship between race, class, gender, sexuality and community.

4.5.7 Critical Race Theory (CRT)

In the aftermath of the Civil Rights Movement in the USA some legal scholars argued that the civil rights movement ended the most brutal expressions of racism, but the more subtle forms are still pervasive and persistent in America. They took issue with the notion of colour blindness in Liberalism. *"Colorblindness suggests that today everybody enjoys equal treatment without regard to race,"* writes M. Zamudio.³³⁶

Although there is a variety of theories under the umbrella of CRT they share some basic tenets. Two protagonists of CRT, R. Delgado and J. Stefancic give the following summary of these tenets.³³⁷

First, *"racism is ordinary, not aberrational – 'normal science', the usual way society does business, the common, everyday experience of most people of color in this country."* CRT talks to white people who might think that there is no racism because apartheid has been abolished in America and black people with a colonized mind who believe these white people.

Second, *"because racism advances the interests of both white elites (materially) and working-class people (psychically), large segments of society have little incentive to eradicate it."* This is a common theme in CRT. It is difficult to eradicate racism. This is meant for people who thought the Civil Rights Movement had abolished racism.

Third, *"race and races are products of social thought and relations. Not objective, inherent, or fixed, they correspond to no biological or genetic reality; rather, races are categories that society invents, manipulates, or retires when convenient."* This is a response to racist scholars who argue there are a biological differences between human beings lead to different social positions.

Fourth, *"the dominant society racializes different minority groups at different times, in response to shifting needs such as the labor market."* This addresses the notion that racism is not only about blacks, but also about other groups, for example Asians – who are racialized.

Fifth, *"the notion of intersectionality and anti-essentialism. No person has a single, easily stated, unitary identity.. Everyone has potentially conflicting, overlapping identities, loyalties, and allegiances."* Intersectionality is a brand of CRT.

Sixth, *"the notion of a unique voice of color... Because of their different histories and experiences with oppression, black, Indian, Asian, and Latino/a writers and thinkers may be able to communicate to their white counterparts matters that the whites are unlikely to know. Minority status, in other words, brings with it a presumed competence to speak about race and racism."*

My critique of CRT comprises xx elements.

First, although CRT criticizes Liberalism for its colour blindness, it sticks to the epistemology of Liberalism. In the critique of Liberalism Zamudio argues that *"the liberal perspective fails to consider the multiple power relationships that give some individuals much greater advantage over others."*³³⁸ The conceptualization is still around individuals. Identity is constructed (see the fifth element above) around the individual and not about

a community. Racism is about the experience of the individual, although they acknowledge that this experience is also formed through the influence of institutions.

Second, CRT does not acknowledge the colonization of the mind and presumes that each voice of people of colour is a voice that is conscious about what racism and oppression is. Therefore it is not able to distinguish between what Malcolm X calls the "house negro" and the "field negro".

Third, CRT sees links racism to one specific form, biological racism and therefore is not able to position biological racism vis-à-vis theological and cultural racism. Its critique of biological racism is limited to the social construct of race and does not take culture and theology into consideration.

Fourth, the conceptualization of racism is along the lines of inequality, not along the lines of superiority/inferiority. It is more about discrimination along lines of class, colour, gender than about superiority-inferiority.

4.6 Marxist theories of racism

Marxism is based on class analysis. Enrique Dussel argues that there is another dimension in Marx's analysis than class, which has been overlooked: community. Dussel: *"With the sole category of 'totality', the oppressed as oppressed within the capital are only an exploited class; but if the category of exteriority is also constituted, the oppressed as person, as man (not wage labour), as nonobjectified living labour, may be poor (individually) and people (as community). 'Class' is the social condition of the oppressed as subsumed by the capital (in the totality); 'people' is the communitarian condition of the oppressed as exteriority."*³³⁹ The oppressed group becomes the working class when it enters into a relationship of exploitation with the capitalist class (totality). If the oppressed group is outside this relationship (exterior) then they are part of a community. This interpretation however cannot dismiss the entire body of work where Marx explicitly uses class analysis in his work.

Marx and Engels made sporadic references in their work on race especially when dealing with the American Civil War and enslavement. But they did not present a theoretical framework on the relationship between race and class.

They had an elaborate theory on the relationship between class and ideology. Marx explains how consciousness in a class society is determined by social existence? Marx: *"The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it."*³⁴⁰

If the working class adheres to the ideas of the ruling class, then they are in a state of "false class consciousness". "True class consciousness" is when the workers understand the basics of theory of scientific socialism. Racist ideas about the biological inferiority of other human beings are part of this false consciousness. All men and women are created equal. Marx believed in the cultural superiority of capitalism compared to previous modes of production and their cultures.

What happens if a group within the working class is discriminated against by another group in the working class? Marx touched on this issue in his essay *On the Jewish Question*. Political emancipation means that the state should not be based on a religion. The German state was then a Christian state. Jews demanded equal rights in a Christian state. They wanted political emancipation. Bauer argued that religion (Christianity and Judaism) is an obstacle to emancipation. So rather than emancipating within an oppressive state, all people should be striving to abolish religion. Marx argued: *"As soon as Jew and Christian recognize that their respective religions are no more than different stages in the development of the human mind, different snake skins cast off by history, and that man*

is the snake who sloughed them, the relation of Jew and Christian is no longer religious but is only a critical, scientific, and human relation. Science, then, constitutes their unity."³⁴¹

There should be a separation of religion and state. Marx: *"It is possible ... for the state to have emancipated itself from religion even if the overwhelming majority is still religious."*³⁴² Human emancipation means that mankind is liberated from religion. Marx: *"The social emancipation of the Jew is the emancipation of society from Judaism."*³⁴³ And for that matter also from Christianity.

The methodology of Marx was used as a model for many Marxist approaches on class and ethnicity. The main goal of mankind is liberation from capitalism. The capitalists use different mechanisms to divide the working class and rule. The promotion of religious (ethnic) identity is such a mechanism. It goes against class consciousness.

The discussion was brought on a practical organizational level in 1897 by a group of Jewish socialists. They founded the Jewish Labour Bund ("Circle") in the Russian empire and claimed to represent the Jewish proletariat. In those days the concept of ethnicity was not used among Marxists. Instead the concept of nation was prominent. A nation is defined as *"a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture."*³⁴⁴

Lenin argues that ethnic identity (national consciousness) goes against class consciousness and thus must be rejected from a Marxist point of view: *"The elements of democratic and socialist culture are present, if only in rudimentary form, in every national culture, since in every nation there are toiling and exploited masses, whose conditions of life inevitably give rise to the ideology of democracy and socialism. But every nation also possesses a bourgeois culture (and most nations a reactionary and clerical culture as well) in the form, not merely of "elements", but of the dominant culture. Therefore, the general "national culture" is the culture of the landlords, the clergy and the bourgeoisie."*³⁴⁵

Lenin makes a distinction between oppressed nations and nations that oppress other nations. He acknowledges that the working class of the oppressor nation can exhibit ethnic prejudices (chauvinism) which hinders the struggle for socialism: *"Take Russia and the attitude of Great Russians towards the Ukrainians. Naturally, every democrat, not to mention Marxists, will strongly oppose the incredible humiliation of Ukrainians, and demand complete equality for them."*³⁴⁶

However, the workers of the oppressed nation cannot use this as an argument to break off relations with the working class of the oppressor nation. Lenin: *"It would be a downright betrayal of socialism and a silly policy even from the standpoint of the bourgeois "national aims" of the Ukrainians to weaken the ties and the alliance between the Ukrainian and Great-Russian proletariat that now exist within the confines of a single state... If a Ukrainian Marxist allows himself to be swayed by his quite legitimate and natural hatred of the Great-Russian oppressors to such a degree that he transfers even a particle of this hatred, even if it be only estrangement, to the proletarian culture and proletarian cause of the Great-Russian workers, then such a Marxist will get bogged down in bourgeois nationalism."*³⁴⁷

So that is it why the step of the Jewish Bund is unacceptable. Lenin: *"Combat all national oppression? Yes, of course! Fight for any kind of national development, for "national culture" in general?—Of course not."*³⁴⁸

Lenin's view is that the party of the proletariat should be united and not divided. The party of the proletariat should fight against prejudices against Jews and thus attract Jews to the party rather than encouraging them to form another party that organises a section of the working class. So he was against the Bund.

After 1917 Lenin further developed his position on the oppressed nations. The Russian revolution was not a revolution confined to the Russian part of the tsarist empire. The

Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR) comprised of the Republics of Transcaucasia, Ukraine, Russia and Byelorussia. The different republics had multiple nations. There were voices in these nations to separate from the Soviet Union under the banner of the right to self-determination.

Lenin set forth his guideline on dealing with the national question in the concept of the right to self-determination: *"The class-conscious workers do not advocate secession. They know the advantages of large states and the amalgamation of large masses of workers. But large states can be democratic only if there is complete equality among the nations; that equality implies the right to secede."*³⁴⁹

He compares it with advocating the right to divorce in a marriage although you don't advocate that people should divorce. But what about his earlier comments on bourgeois nationalism that wants to separate the working class? Lenin answers his critics as follows: *"By supporting the right to secession, we are told, you are supporting the bourgeois nationalism of the oppressed nations. This is what Rosa Luxemburg says... Our reply to this is: No, it is to the bourgeoisie that a "practical" solution of this question is important. To the workers the important thing is to distinguish the principles of the two trends. Insofar as the bourgeoisie of the oppressed and more strongly than anyone else, in favour, for we are the staunchest and the most consistent enemies of oppression. But insofar as the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation stands for its own bourgeois nationalism, we stand against. We fight against the privileges and violence of the oppressor nation, and do not in any way condone strivings for privileges on the part of the oppressed nation."*³⁵⁰

In other words, by this policy the working class of the oppressor nations hopes to convince the working class of the oppressed nation that it is willing to champion the rights of the latter. In doing so it hopes to avoid a actual secession.

The struggle for socialism is a struggle against global capitalism. Once capitalism has been defeated globally a new word will arise that does away with prejudices. Against nationalism Lenin puts internationalism: *"In place of all forms of nationalism Marxism advances internationalism, the amalgamation of all nations in the higher unity, a unity that is growing before our eyes with every mile of railway line that is built, with every international trust, and every workers' association that is formed."*³⁵¹

The views of Marx and Lenin about racism were based on the idea that ethnic consciousness (based on community or nation) is inferior to class consciousness which is based on scientific socialism. The task of Marxists is to educate the workers of the oppressed and oppressor's nations in the theory of scientific socialism so that they have a correct understanding of the world. Lenin: *"There could not have been Social-Democratic [SH. class] consciousness among the workers. It would have to be brought to them from without. The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness, i.e., the conviction that it is necessary to combine in unions, fight the employers, and strive to compel the government to pass necessary labour legislation, etc.. The theory of socialism, however, grew out of the philosophic, historical, and economic theories elaborated by educated representatives of the propertied classes, by intellectuals. By their social status the founders of modern scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged to the bourgeois intelligentsia."*³⁵²

Contrary to Marcus Garvey's notion about emancipation from mental slavery that *"whilst others might free the body, none but ourselves can free the mind"*³⁵³, Lenin argues that the working class is not capable by itself to achieve true consciousness. That consciousness must be brought from outside the working class by revolutionary intellectuals who have a scientific understanding of how capitalism works in the best traditions of European Enlightenment.

4.7 Conclusion

Racism is primarily about institutions that shape social, cultural, economic and political relations between human beings. Understanding racism is understanding how the institutions shape feelings, attitudes and human interaction. The institutions of knowledge production – part of the cultural dimension of colonialism – have produced concepts that divide human beings and their communities along the lines of superiority and inferiority. In the history of colonialism three types of concepts of superiority/inferiority have been produced that are linked to the authority of knowledge production in the different phases of colonialism. And thus we have three DTM concepts of racism: theological, biological and cultural racism. We live in an era where cultural racism is prevalent, although remnants of the other concepts can still be found.

Liberal theories take the individual as the basis of their analysis and thus they end up with theories of racism that seek the cause of racism in individual behaviour.

Marxism takes class as the basis of their analysis. They see racism as an instrument to divide and rule the working class in capitalism. Racism arose with capitalism. Historically the working class became a dominant class during industrial capitalism, which in Europe arose in the late eighteenth, beginning of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the working class in Europe was predominantly white. So racism could not be an instrument of divide and rule in Europe in that period. Yet Marxism puts the ideology of racism within the context of the rise of capitalism instead of the rise of colonialism. It does not see the links between theological, biological and cultural racism.

Neither Liberalism nor Marxism acknowledge the colonization of the mind. Thus the analyses of the mechanisms of (de)colonizing is left out of their conceptual framework.

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²⁵ I have refrained from giving citations from Marx and Engels because the Marxist economic theory is very complex and a short resume by Marx and Engels was difficult to

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²¹⁵ Idem, p. 28-29.

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